

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
ESCANABA, MICHIGAN
November 10, 2016**

A meeting of the Escanaba Planning Commission was held on Thursday, November 10, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in Room C101 at City Hall, 410 Ludington Street, Escanaba, MI 49829.

PRESENT: Vice-Chairperson Kel Smyth, Secretary Roy Webber, Commissioners Brian Black, Tom Warstler, James Hellerman, Christine Williams, and Paul Caswell

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Jim O'Toole, Executive Assistant Lisa Glish, City Council Liaison Ronald Beauchamp, and Tom Howald from ALDI Inc.

ABSENT: Commissioner Morley Diment

Vice-Chairperson Kel Smyth called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Executive Assistant Lisa Glish conducted roll call.

Jim O'Toole noted that he believes Commissioner Morley Diment has moved away from the area, but that he has yet to receive a confirming letter from Commissioner Diment notifying the commission of his resignation from the commission.

APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2016 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner Webber, to approve the October 18, 2016 Planning Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Ayes were unanimous.

APPROVAL/ADJUSTMENTS TO THE OCTOBER 18, 2016 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public Hearing – Site Plan Review – 2510 3rd Avenue North – ALDI Inc.

Jim O'Toole stated a site plan review will be conducted on a proposed 19,861 s.f. grocery store being proposed by ALDI, Inc. The purpose of the review is to allow the public the opportunity to review the site plan and gain an understanding of the proposed project.

Jim then read the Staff Report in to record as follows:

**CITY OF ESCANABA
SITE PLAN REVIEW REPORT
CASE NO. PC 110116-01**

REFERENCE: 2510 3rd Avenue North, Escanaba, MI 49829

DATE: November 1, 2016

PROPERTY OWNER/APPLICANT ADDRESS:

Mr. Tom Howald
Aldi, Inc.
9342 South 13th Street
Oak Creek, WI 53154

TYPE OF REQUEST:

In accordance with Section 1801.3 Site Plan Required of Escanaba's Zoning Ordinance, a site plan review for Land Use Permit must be conducted prior to the use permit issuance.

CURRENT ZONING:

Light Manufacturing "F" and Commercial District "D".

ORDINANCE:

Ordinance No.1028 Escanaba Zoning Ordinance.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT:

Mr. Tom Howald, Director of Real Estate for Aldi, Inc. has submitted an application for zoning land use approval for property they own and/or control or have option on at 2510 3rd. Avenue North, Escanaba, MI. In the application, Aldi, Inc. proposes to construct a 19,861 s.f. grocery store.

COMPLIANCE WITH DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

1. The proposed construction (building) will be located on property which is zoned Light Manufacturing "F" and Commercial District "D". The proposed use is a permitted use by right as defined in section 1002.1.B and 1302.1.B. of the Escanaba Zoning Ordinance.
2. The proposed construction will meet Zoning Ordinance standards for a Light Manufacturing "F" District.
3. The proposed construction site plan diagram complies with Chapter 18. Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1802 Site Plan Diagram/Requirements; paragraph 1802.2 Site Plan Diagram Requirements, subparagraphs A-X.
4. In accordance with the requirements found in Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1803 Site Plan Review, paragraph 1803.1.1.1. A Pre-Application Conference was scheduled and conducted on October 21, 2016.

5. In accordance with the requirements found in Chapter 18. Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1803 Site Plan Review, paragraph Section 1803.1.1.2 Application, the applicant applied for site plan consideration as required.
6. All fee and notification requirements of the Ordinance have been accommodated.

DUTIES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

In accordance with Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1803 Site Plan Review, paragraph 1803.2 Public Hearing Requirement, prior to voting on a final site plan, the Planning Commission must hold a Public Hearing so as to facilitate public review and understanding of the proposed development.

In accordance with Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1803 Site Plan Review, paragraph 1803.3. Planning commission Review, once a site plan is forwarded to the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission is required to review the site plan according to the standards and requirements of Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards. The Planning Commission must approve or deny the site plan according to the standards and requirements of the Zoning Ordinance within 45 days of submission of said plan.

In accordance with Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1803 Site Plan Review, paragraph 1803.4. Site Plan Approval, should the Planning Commission approve the site plan, the applicant, the owner of record, or the legal representative thereof, the Planning Commission Chairperson and one other member of the Planning Commission shall each sign four copies of the approved site plan. The Planning Commission shall transmit one signed copy of the plan and any conditions attached to the Code Official, and one signed copy each to the office of the City Clerk and the applicant. One signed copy shall be retained in the Planning Commission file.

In accordance with Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1803 Site Plan Review, paragraph 1803.5.1 Site Plan Rejection, should the Planning Commission reject the site plan, the property owner may appeal the decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL STANDARDS

In accordance with Section 1804. Site Plan Approval Standards of Escanaba's Zoning Ordinance, the proposed site conforms to the following site development standards:

- A. The main entrance faces 3rd Avenue North and North 26th Street.
- B. All roof mounted equipment will be screened.
- C. Reasonable and visible sound mitigation measures have been taken.
- D. The building is arranged to permit adequate emergency access to all sides of both buildings.
- E. The development has legal access to two public streets.
- F. The development provides for vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
- G. All parking areas are designed to facilitate safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
- H. Curb cuts were minimized onto 3rd Avenue North and will allow for future shared drives should the neighboring property be developed in the future.
- I. All loading and unloading areas and outside storage areas shall be adequately screened.

- J. Exterior lights shall be reflected downward and away from adjacent properties and right of ways.
- K. Adequate utilities will be provided and placed underground.
- L. All premises will be graded to prevent accumulation of stagnant water.

STAFF FINDINGS, COMMENT, GENERAL PLAN GOALS AND CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

- A. The proposed use is consistent with the surrounding uses of the area.
- B. The proposed use is a permitted use by right as defined in Section 1002.1.B and Section 1302.1.B. of the Escanaba Zoning Ordinance.
- C. In accordance with the 2016 Community Master Plan, Page 108, Action E25 Regional Retail this area has been designated to accommodate big box retail development west of North Lincoln Road between 3rd. Avenue North and 9th Avenue North

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated Taxing Entity Review – Aldi, Inc., Escanaba, Michigan

	Estimated Value	
	Estimate	\$ 1,300,000.00
Taxing Entity	Millage	Estimated Revenue
School Operating	18.0000	11,700.00
State Ed	6.0000	3,900.00
City Services	17.0000	11,000.00
Delta County	6.8317	4,500.00
Escanaba School	4.7500	3,100.00
Bay College	3.3076	2,100.00
ISD	2.3851	1,500.00
DATA	0.6000	400.00
Total Millage	58.8744	\$ 38,200.00

PUBLIC CONTACT:

Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Escanaba Daily Press Newspaper and meeting notices were mailed to the adjacent property owners of the project site.

Staff report was posted on the City of Escanaba website for public review.

The meeting agenda was posted on the City’s official notice bulletin board and the City of Escanaba’s website.

STANDARDS AND QUESTIONS (FINDING OF FACTS):

I accordance with Chapter 18., Site Plan and Sketch Plan Standards, Section 1801 General, paragraph 1801.1. Purpose, the Planning Commission must ensure that the plan outlines the use and development of the property and is designed to provide for the future growth and development of business that seek and aesthetically attractive working environment.

1. Is the development designed to integrate well with adjacent developments?
2. Is the development designed to minimize nuisance impacts on adjoining parcels?
3. Is the development designed to ensure safe and functional traffic access and parking?
4. Is the development designed to minimize impacts on sensitive environmental resources?

ALTERNATIVES:

Not applicable.

ENFORCEMENT HISTORY:

None.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

None

BACK-UP INFORMATION:

1. Application for Zoning Land Use Approval
2. Site Plan Diagram
3. Assessor's Property Information Card
4. Site Photographs
5. 300' radius property owner/tenant notification letter
6. 300' radius labels

Jim O'Toole invited Tom Howald from ALDI, Inc. to approach the podium to explain the project and answer any questions.

Tom Howald started by commenting on how the company is very excited to have the opportunity to have a store in the Upper Peninsula, namely in Escanaba. He went onto explain that ALDI, Inc. is a grocer that provides excellent product at the lowest price. He mentioned that a lot of people should already be familiar with ALDI if they have shopped in Lower Michigan or Wisconsin. He went onto explain that the products offered in their stores are based on feedback from customers over the years, and ALDI seeks those products out to offer them at the lowest price. He feels that with this current development with compliment the new Meijers development, and any future developments. Tom then stated that they have included a curb cut in the Site Plan to accommodate any future developments for a shared access drive.

Commissioner Webber mentioned that he did some research on ALDI before the meeting and he found that ALDI Inc. pays their employees a higher wage, but they don't have grocery baggers. Tom Howald stated that that is true, and for this project he estimates there to be around ten (10) employees – one (1) casual employee and nine (9) or ten (10) full-time employees, he went onto state that they do compensate their employees much better than their competition.

Commission Webber went onto ask Tom Howald if they carry any national brands, other than their house brands. Tom Howald replied that they carry about 90/10, 90% house brands and 10% iconic brands. Tom went onto explain that their house brands are not necessarily "generic" brand what ALDI does is they find who makes the best product, and approaches that company and asks if they would be willing for ALDI to carry their brand under the ALDI label, and be able to sell it

at a much lower price. He went onto use the example of ketchup, the highest selling ketchup in America right now is Heintz, what ALDI will do is go to Heintz and negotiate with them to allow ALDI to carry their product under their name cutting the product price by not having to pay for all of the advertising for it; if Heintz would not do that for them, then they would move onto the next company and find one that will. He mentioned that they have their own corporate test kitchen that tests all products to guarantee that they are offering the best products to the customer. Tom went onto explain that they do carry some iconic brands like Coca-Cola and Tide, along with other product brands like that that they know will not work as a generic in their product scheme. Commissioner Webber stated that he is still leery with having generic brands up here, because he feels as though they have a negative reputation.

Commissioner Webber also asked how Escanaba will benefit having another grocery store in town since there are already two major retail grocers, two large local grocers, one restaurant supply grocer, one major neighborhood grocer, and multiple convenience stores. Tom Howald responded by stating that he feels that what ALDI has to offer is unique to the area, and that he knows ALDI can help people cut their monthly grocery bills by around 50%.

Commissioner Webber went onto ask how they accommodate for handicap customers since they don't have baggers, how do those customers get their items to their vehicles. Tom Howald responded by stating that their customer service is their number one focus, and if someone comes into a store needing assistance like that, they are always accommodated for. He went onto state that working with Jim O'Toole, ALDI has developed a designated area that will work with the local bussing service (DATA) for customer pick-ups and drop-offs.

Commissioner Caswell asked Tom Howald to explain ALDI, Inc.'s unique cart rental system. Tom went onto explain that the cart rental system runs off of quarters; the way it works is once a quarter is inserted into the slot the lock unlocks the chain from the next cart, and then when people return their cart to the covered cart corral they lock their cart back up and their quarter is returned to them. Tom stated that this method has helped reduce cart losses and liability since carts are not normally lingering around the parking lot. He went onto state that the "ALDI Cart Exchange" creates more of a social aspect in the parking lot by people passing their cart onto someone else when they are done with them, giving someone a quarter that may need one, and he also stated that this has even become something talked about on social media.

Commissioner Hellerman questioned why ALDI Inc. decided to create so much space between the Walmart drive to the development site. Tom Howald explained that ALDI was not interested in that site because it is too big for what they were looking for.

Tom Howald went onto state that working with the City Engineer they have decided to put in an underground storm water detention system, and on that they will be installing inlets for any future developments to be able to connect into.

Commissioner Hellerman noted that Bill Farrell had a concern with the LH turn coming from the 3rd Avenue Exit, and asked if anything has been done to fix that. Jim O'Toole mentioned that they have had a discussion already on this issue and those details have been remedied.

Jim O'Toole updated everyone on future planning by stating that the City has applied for a Grant to redo 3rd Avenue South from Stephenson to North 30th Street; during that construction the plan is to eliminate unnecessary curb cuts and look into the possibility of a traffic control measure at 3rd and 30th. Jim went onto state that that project will probably take place in 2018.

Commissioner Warstler asked about how the size of this new building would compare with the existing ALDI in Marinette. Tom Howald responded by saying that the Escanaba will be larger; the Marinette store has just over 10,000sf sales floor, where the Escanaba store will have 12,000sf sales floor, with a lot more refrigeration for offerings.

Tom Howald went onto show samples of the materials and colors that will be used on the store exterior.

Commissioner Williams asked if they have looked into any negation to deal with gulls. Tom Howald stated that they have not, but if they feel as though there is an issue after it is built they will look into then. He went onto state that the roof is made of a white membrane, that it is not a gravel roof.

A general conversation about Dark Store issues took place.

Vice-Chairperson Smyth asked if any members of the public would like to come forward for comment, no one came forward.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hellerman, seconded by Commissioner Caswell, to approve the Site Plan for ALDI, Inc. as presented. Ayes were unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Jim O’Toole stated that a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting took place this month and at that meeting a variance for a five (5) foot rear yard setback for 316 South 3rd Street, which was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Williams gave an update on the Delta County Planning Commission stating they are starting to lay out a process to deal with zoning violations in the County and how to move forward with them. Jim O’Toole directed Commissioner Williams to Chapters Two (2) and Three (3) of the City of Escanaba Zoning Ordinance for guidance.

Jim O’Toole updated the Commission on the current Zoning Permit Report dated January 1, 2106 thru November 10, 2016.

ZONING PERMITS REPORT		
January 1, 2016 thru November 10, 2016		
4	NEW RESIDENTIAL HOME	\$ 721,844
28	RESIDENTIAL REMODEL	\$ 721,600
4	NEW COMMERCIAL	\$ 1,997,600
17	COMMERCIAL REMODEL	\$ 6,669,700
2	CHANGE OF USE	\$ -
2	HOME OCCUPATION	\$ -
0	LAND USE PERMIT	\$ -
8	DEMOLITION PERMIT	\$ 60,220
65	TOTAL	\$ 10,180,964

Jim O’Toole updated the Commission on the Redevelopment Ready Community project stating that the Parking Ordinance that was approved last month by the Commission is being sent to City

Council approval, and once that is approved the last item that will need to be completed is a Marketing and Branding strategy. Jim noted that there will be a workshop on Marketing and Branding on December 6th, which all may attend. He went onto state that he is pushing to get this certification done by Christmas.

Commissioner Warstler asked Jim O'Toole if any feedback has come in for the House of Ludington project. Jim stated that he did email the developer and they noted that they got everything into the State, and hoping to begin sometime in April.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COMMISSION/STAFF COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Williams noted how refreshing it is to see all of the updates going on down Ludington Street.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Caswell, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m. Ayes were unanimous.

Kel Smyth, Vice Chairperson
Escanaba Planning Commission

James V. O'Toole, City Manager
City of Escanaba

Roy Webber, Secretary
Escanaba Planning Commission