

**VILLAGE OF SPARTA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
March 3, 2025 @ 7:00 PM
75 N. Union St. (Sparta Civic Center)**

- 1) CALL TO ORDER
- 2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 3) ROLL CALL
- 4) ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA
Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approve Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of December 2, 2024
- 5) APPROVAL OF CONSENT & BUSINESS AGENDA
- 6) PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS
- 7) COMMUNICATIONS –
- 8) PUBLIC HEARING –
 - a. None.
- 9) NEW BUSINESS –
 - a. Chair, Vice-Chair, & Secretary Selection
 - b. Site Plan- Review Town Square Project
- 10) UNFINISHED BUSINESS –
 - a. None.
- 11) PUBLIC COMMENT
- 12) VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT
- 13) COMMISSION COMMENT
- 14) ADJOURNMENT

**VILLAGE OF SPARTA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
December 2, 2024 @ 7:00 PM
75 N. Union St. (Sparta Civic Center)**

Present: Chairperson Emilie Henry, Commissioners Bob Liscombe, Robert Carlstrom, Rose Frederick, Gary Moody, Christina Owens, and Robert Whalen.

Absent: Jon Braybrook

Also present: Village Manager Jim Lower and Village Clerk Katy Shelton.

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.
- 2) **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- 3) **Roll Call:** Formal roll call was taken. Those in attendance/absent are noted above.
- 4) **Additions or corrections to the business and consent agenda:**
Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approve Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of October 7, 2024
None.
- 5) **Approval of consent and business agenda:** Motion by Moody with a second by Liscombe to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
- 6) **Public comment on agenda items:**
 - a. None.
- 7) **Public hearing:**
 - a. **Ord. 24-08 An ordinance to amend Section 82-132, 82-194, and to amend the official zoning map of the Village of Sparta accordingly.**

Public hearing opened at 7:01pm. Village Manager Lower explained that this ordinance with minor issues regarding accessory dwelling units, high density apartment buildings, and rezoning along Division St on the east side of the Village. Commissioner Carlstrom asked about multi family units. Village Manager Lower said that the maximum height was 40' or three stories. He said that there are no buildings in the Village that exceed either of those limits. There was no public comment. Public hearing closed at 7:05 pm. Regular meeting resumes.

8) New business:

- a. **Ord. 24-08 An ordinance to amend section 82-132, 82-194, and to amend the official zoning map of the Village of Sparta accordingly.** Motion made by Moody with a second by Owens to approve this and to recommend sending this on to the Village Council. Motion passed unanimously.

9) Unfinished business:

- a. None.

10) Public comment:

- a. None.

- 11) **Village Manager's Report:** The Village Manager said that Planning Commission members will be paid this month for 2024. He also said that Planning Commission meetings will remain the first Monday of the month, and that Village Council meetings will now be on the third Monday of the month.

12) Commission Comment:

- a. None.

- 13) **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned by Chairperson Henry at 7:07pm.

Submitted by Village Clerk Katy Shelton.



8.b
Village of Sparta Planning
Commission
March 3, 2025

MEMO
Staff Communication

DATE: March 3, 2025
TO: Planning Commission Chair and Planning Commission Members
FROM: James A. Lower, Village Manager
RE: Site Plan Review Report – Town Square Project

General Information

The proposed site plan involves milling and filling most of the existing parking lot. The plan will also reconfigure the parking spaces and lot layout. We will also be adding dedicated community gathering spaces with a fire pit, stage, assembly area, and lighting.

The historic rail road depot will be moved to the site and renovated/restored. The ticketing booth and lobby of the building will be preserved in its period condition and used as a small rail road themed museum. The functionally obsolete loading bay will be re-purposed as community bathrooms to serve downtown. The building will be ADA accessible, as will all of the sidewalks and community offerings.

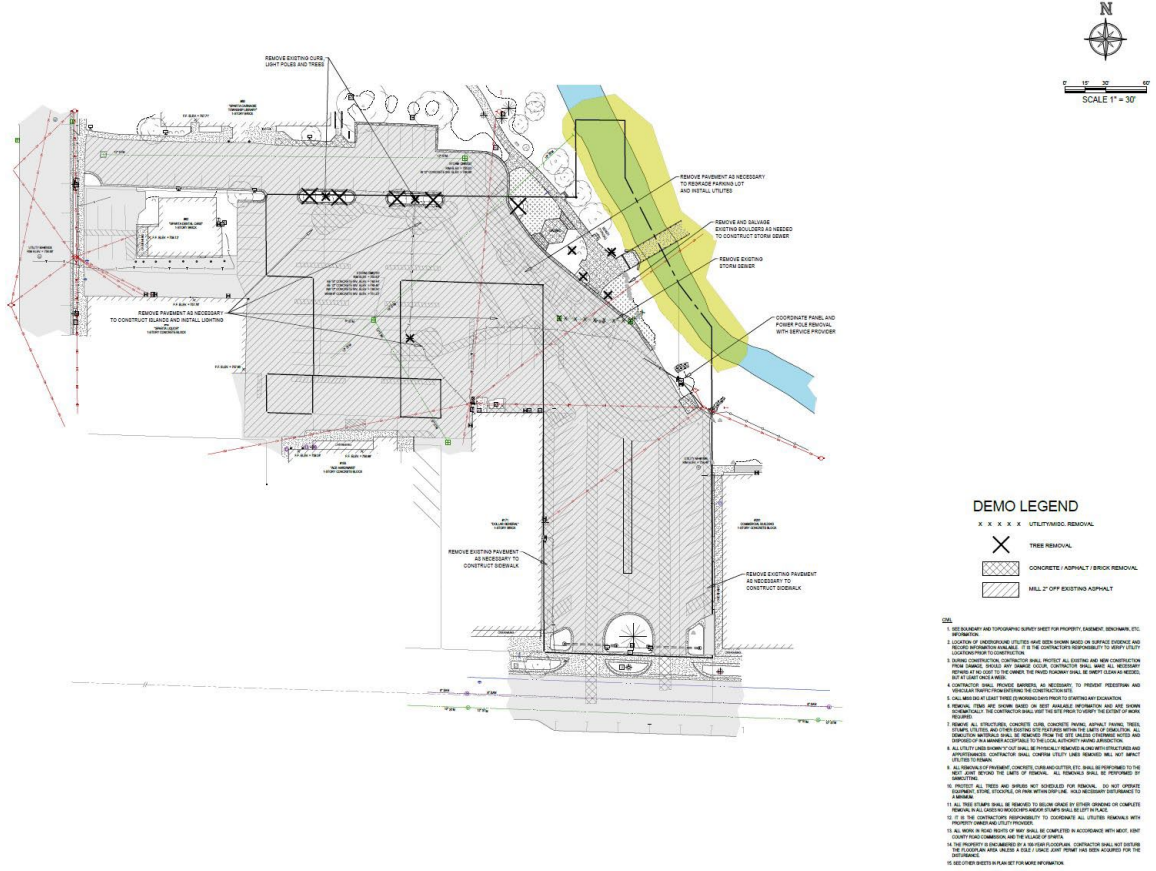
The West Michigan Rail Road Historic Society is supporting the rail road depot project as a way and a means to preserve this piece of Sparta history. Without this project the building is almost certain to fall back into a further state of disrepair and remain largely unused.

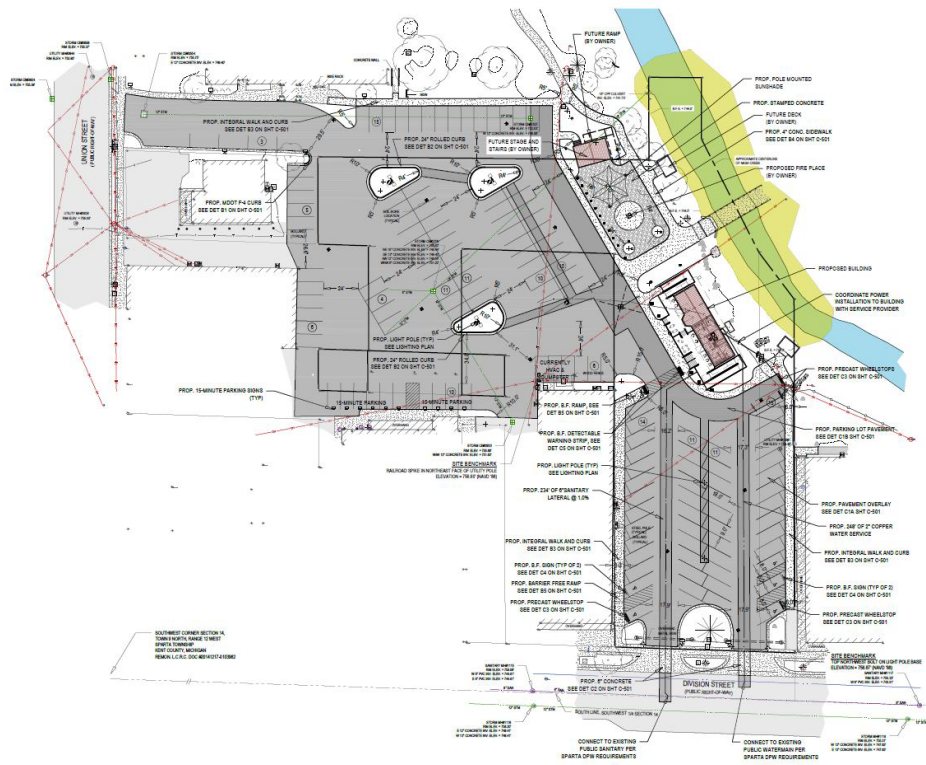
We have worked with the DDA, Sparta Chamber of Commerce, and Business owners surrounding the parking lot and gathering space to build as much support and consensus around the design and layout of this project as possible.

Two grants are funding this project. One funds the parking lot upgrades and gathering space and the other funds the rail road depot/bathrooms. The matching funds will be provided by the Sparta DDA. So, with the exception of logistical and administrative expertise from the Village of Sparta staff, this project is almost entirely funded by Grants and the DDA.

Notes:

Overview of additions (Drawings will be on the projector at the meeting)





- NOTES:**
1. SITE DESIGN SHALL BE ACCORDANT WITH THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE SITE DESIGN REPORT AND SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE PUBLIC CONTRACTOR. SHALL ASSURE A COPY OF THE SITE DESIGN REPORT AND THE DESIGN INFORMATION, INCLUDING ANY AND ALL NOTES, IS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC CONTRACTOR. THE PUBLIC CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE VILLAGE OF SPARTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES.
 2. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE TO VERIFY THAT ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS HAVE BEEN OBTAINED PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.
 3. ALL MATERIALS TO BE USED SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE VILLAGE OF SPARTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.
 4. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE TO OBTAIN ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE VILLAGE OF SPARTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.
 5. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL VERIFY THAT THERE ARE NO UTILITY CONFLICTS PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.
 6. ALL SANITARY SEWER WORK SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CURRENT EDITION OF THE VILLAGE OF SPARTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS.
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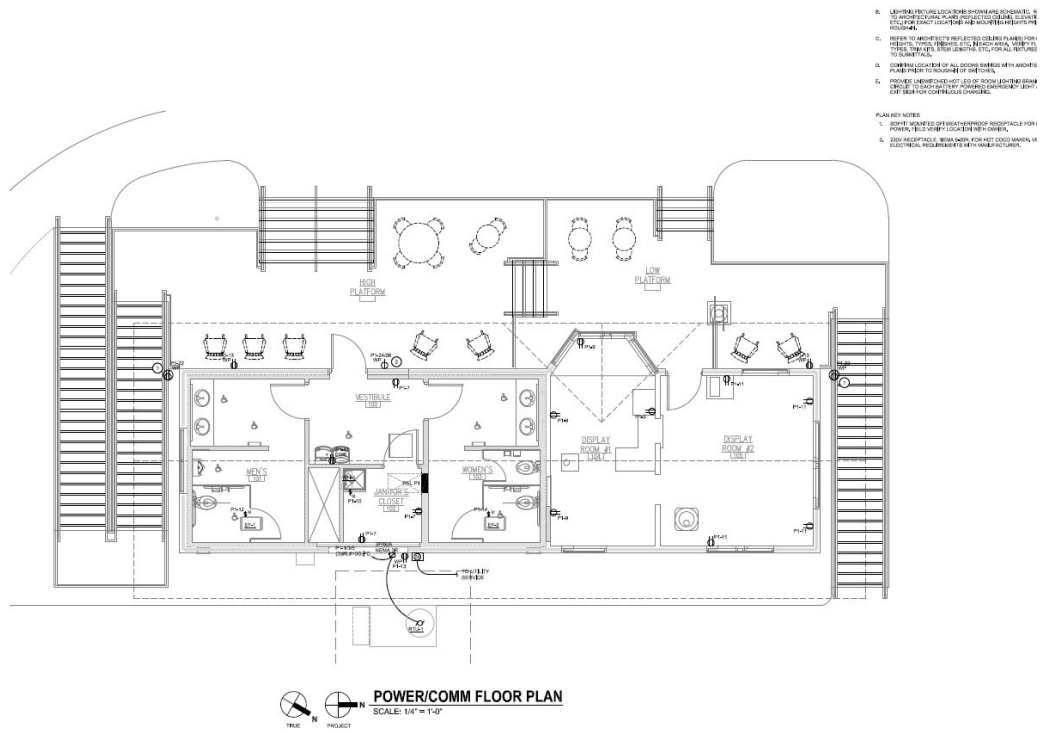


Sparta Train Depot



Sparta Train Depot





Site Location:

This property has multiple addresses. It is the parking lot located near the library, Nash Creek, Dollar General, 201 Market Place, Ace Hardware, Brick Haus, and other businesses.

Current Zoning:

CBD- Central Business Commercial District

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:

- North: RM- Residential Medium Density & B- Business
- East: CBD- Central Business Commercial District
- West: CBD- Central Business Commercial District
- South: CBD- Central Business Commercial District

Applicable Regulations:

The building and property require site plan review

Master Plan:

The site plan and zoning of the area match the goals of our master plan.

Staff Comments and Proposed Conditions:

The proposed changes represent years of work by village staff, the DDA, and the Sparta Chamber Commerce. Tremendous effort has been put into finding grant funding to support this project as well. The site plan has evolved over time to accommodate the changing needs of the downtown area and businesses. We have attempted to balance the need for parking with the popularity and vibrancy that events downtown bring. We hope that once this is completed it will serve for many years as a focal point for downtown businesses and residents.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends a motion to approve the site plan as presented

The Planning Commission will meet **March 3rd, 2025 at 7:00 PM**. If you have any questions or concerns about this report or you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact me villagemanager@spartami.org.