

GENERAL DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Gary Hansen has become a presenter for Linn County TRIAD. Linn County TRIAD is a partnership of county and local law enforcement, other organizations and individuals who work together to promote senior safety. Gary will be presenting on Construction Fraud to senior citizen property owners when requested.

Richard Szewc attended a half-day ICC training titled “An Inspectors Guide to Braced Wall Panels” earning him 4 credit hours.

BUILDING DIVISION STATISTICS

INSPECTIONS	CURRENT	LAST MONTH	LAST YEAR
ALL CONSTRUCTION	478	637	619
WRECKING	0	1	0
BEER & LIQUOR INSP	3	6	11
COMPLAINT INSPECTIONS	8	13	23
TOTAL INSPECTIONS	489	657	653
PERMITS			
ACTIVE DEPT PERMITS	4,109	3,966	3,476
PERMITS ISSUED	314	314	216
NEW SINGLE FAMILY	11	22	15
NEW MULTI-FAMILY (UNITS)	(1 apt bldg) 50	0	0
NEW COMMERCIAL	2	1	1
REMODEL/ADD. COMMERCIAL	2	3	3
RENTAL HOUSING			
RENTAL HOUSING UNITS	4,456	4,455	4,383
TOTAL RENTAL INSPECTIONS	218	278	151

COMMERCIAL BUILDING ACTIVITY UPDATE

As the City’s commercial areas continue to grow, so do the building projects being permitted. The City of Marion Building Department has 38 active Commercial projects ongoing and have gotten completion on 5 of them as of the end of this month. This is just major commercial projects, and does not include any residential houses, condos, additions, accessory buildings, or many other residential and commercial small projects that get inspected.

Some of the new projects getting started or starting soon, are Starbucks, the Marion Can Shed, and a build-out for the Marion Pizza Ranch, which will be going into the retail center on Carlson Way. Also, the Marion Eco Industrial Maintenance Facility and Marion Fire Station are moving forward despite the cold weather. The long-awaited YMCA is starting with site work, and footings will be starting with cold weather protection requirements in effect. In addition to those the two new Linn Mar Schools are geared up and going strong.

BUILDING CODE COMPLIANCE UPDATE

BUILDING CODE COMPLAINTS	CURRENT	LAST MONTH	LAST YEAR
NEW COMPLAINTS	9	14	15
RESOLVED COMPLAINTS	5	8	31
ACTIVE COMPLAINTS	39	31	30
ACTIVE COMPLAINTS BY TYPE	CURRENT	LAST MONTH	LAST YEAR
BUILDING MISCELLANEOUS	7	6	3
DEBRIS IN YARD	5	4	6
HOUSING	13	9	10
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	14	12	11

EXISTING COMPLAINTS OF INTEREST

660 – 670 51st Street (Richard Havlik) An ongoing case started in response to the vehicle disassembly process at these two properties has now included the pursuing of multiple nuisances. 2 Notices to abate requesting all junk and junk vehicles be removed have been drafted and delivered. The completion date has been set at 12/17/2018. Richard has filed an appeal and is requesting more time to complete the clean-up. **Ongoing cleanup is putting this nuisance on track for a December completion per the court order. No vehicles remain on the property and most of the debris has been loaded into containers and are ready to be hauled away.**

1614 Mary Drive (Zach Schminkey) On 3/7/2019, PD requested that staff assist them with housing issues while they perform a search warrant. Exterior of the home had a lot of debris as well as the interior. There was a fire in the home prior to the search warrant and was never repaired. Owner was attempting to repair it without permits or inspections. There was lots of exposed wires and many other code violations noted in the home. Staff took pictures and condemned the home. Occupants returned sometime thereafter and proceeded to toss multiple items out the front door. Staff is currently working with Squaw Creek Village to get the items removed from the property. **This home is scheduled to be removed from the court. It remains clean, secure and unoccupied.**

1565 7th Avenue (Idella Hogan) Staff has identified several issues with the condition of this home. Pictures were taken and a friendly letter was mailed asking for cooperation with the correction of these items. The requests of the letter went unanswered and an Order to Abate was drafted and sent. The time frame given to remove the garbage from the driveway was not met. Staff made several attempts to contact and finally spoke with Idella's son Dwight. He was aware of the issues and agreed to act. As of April 30th, no action has been taken to remove the garbage or to perform any property maintenance items noted in the order. Idella has until 5/2/2019 to remove the garbage and until 5/27/19 to address the remaining items within the order to abate. **With Idella's daughter now assisting with the matter, staff has directed the City Attorney to support additional time to complete the cleanup and repairs of this property.**

565 Central Avenue (Jo Anne Morris) An anonymous letter was received regarding the condition of this property. A site inspection was made on the property and significant dilapidation was noted. Contact with the owner has been attempted through door visits, phone calls. An Order to Abate will be drawn up and sent. **Jo Hill has decided to repair the structure and has sought bids for a roof replacement and removal of a shed and the attached porch.**

938 8th Street (William Barrow) Complaints from the neighbors about a large dumpster and tall grass on this property were taken by staff. The neighbors are quick to react on this property as it has been a problem in the past. Bill was contacted and informed staff that he had moved and was cleaning out his old place. Bill agreed to have the dumpster removed as soon as he could. **It does not appear that Bill is maintaining the property at this point. The structure remains secure though. No further complaints have been received regarding the condition of this property.**

2345 5th Avenue (Chuck Harriott) This multi-unit structure suffered a severe fire in a single downstairs unit. The fire separations and construction practices built into the structure helped ensure that the remaining units were not involved in the fire and no other tenants were displaced. The unit has been posted with a No Occupancy, and openings have been boarded up to secure the unit. Staff is currently working with the owner to securely maintain the structure and then to work towards the rebuilding process of this unit. **Chuck has started the cleanup of the property and is assessing the extent of the repairs needed to bring the unit back into a livable condition.**

590 Bently Drive (Barry Smith) PD was called to this unit because of an open-door situation. They discovered the unit was unsecured and that it had a severe sanitation problem. Management was contacted by staff and was informed that this unit is currently listed as unoccupied and was being inhabited by squatters with no power and clogged plumbing. Management has taken actions to secure the unit and to clean it in preparation to be rented. **This unit has been cleaned up and is ready for a new tenant.**

NEW COMPLAINTS OF INTEREST

1400 13th Avenue (Ken Spence) Staff was alerted to this situation by the tenant. She stated that there was sewage backup in her basement and was demanding that staff clean it up asap. She was asked to contact her landlord (Ken Spence) and request he perform the necessary work to get her sewer backup under control. Ken Spence was contacted by staff and stated that he has an excavation company scheduled to replace the sewer line to the street.

1425 Meadowview Drive (Bill Burkle) Staff was contacted by a tenant who wished to remain anonymous. She was very concerned about the condition of the common area of her apartment complex. She stated it was full of filth and safety issues but did not elaborate. She also was concerned about the garbage around the dumpster area. Staff investigated and found no concerning items in the common area but did identify the area around the garbage container as needing cleaned up.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY UPDATE

Squaw Creek Crossing

The developer continues work on projects in the Squaw Creek Crossings Development at Highway 13 and Highway 151. A final site development plan for the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Hotel was approved with conditions. The developer has submitted revised renderings that Staff is currently reviewing for compliance with the Design Guidelines and City Council conditions. Work on the multi-tenant building continues with an early spring 2020 open date, with Pizza Ranch as the only publicly announced tenant.

Uptown Commercial District:

- Former Maid-Rite Building: Has been purchased by Joe Hill and Jamie Hoth with preliminary plans to update the 2nd floor apartments and retail / restaurant plans on the main floor. Options are being explored for the basement to return it to a usable space.

General Commercial Improvements:

- Hy-Vee (3600 Highway 151): Exterior improvements which included EIFS repair, brick staining and replacement of columns are nearing a completion, interior remodel to begin in spring 2020.
- D-Bat (1783 Red Fox Way): Work has begun on the baseball / softball pitching and hitting complex. Work will continue through the winter and the structure should be enclosed within the next week or two. A spring 2020 open date is anticipated.
- 7th Avenue Multi-Tenant Malls: Work continues on the strip malls on 7th Avenue and will be enclosed in the next few weeks. Late Spring 2020 are anticipated complete dates.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Planning & Zoning Commission

The Marion Planning & Zoning Commission met on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 and took action on the following items:

- The Commission recommended approval of a request for the accessory keeping of honey bees at 1860 Agate Circle.
- The Commission recommended approval of Wildrye Farms 1st Addition Final Plat to Linn County.
- The Commission recommended denial of site plan and building elevations for temporary kiosks for the West End Development for property located at 809 6th Avenue.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

The Marion Zoning Board of Adjustment met on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 and took action on the following items:

- The Board approved a variance for a garage door setback at 969 14th Street.
- The Board approved a conditional use for the accessory keeping of honey bees at 1860 Agate Circle.

Historic Preservation Commission

The Marion Historic Preservation Commission met on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 and general updates were presented on uptown Marion projects within the historic district, no items required action.

ZONING MAP UPDATE

City Staff has completed proposed changes to the Citywide zoning map update. Staff conducted four open houses and had increased attendance at each with several council members in attendance. Several properties were identified that require additional review and discussion. Staff has begun conducting meetings with those affected property owners. A dedicated website has been created regarding the update at www.cityofmarion.org/zoningmapupdate, news, maps and upcoming open house dates are available through the website.

TRAILS

Grant Wood Trail Extension (35th Street to Highway 13)

Final asphalt sealing has been completed and final audit with IDOT will begin soon.

CeMar Trail (7th Street to Marion city Limits, including bridges)

Staff was also able to sit down with the Shoemaker Haaland to discuss phasing the trail into smaller segments that can be bid/let into more achievable sections with the potential to have some proceed with a fall/winter letting. The bridge demolition over Marion Boulevard is set for an August 20th letting through the IDOT. Discussions continue with the property owners south of Highway 100 regarding sewer and trail alignment.

Indian Creek Trail (Boyson Trail to Tower Terrace Road)

Snyder and Associates has already begun survey work and environmental studies for the trail alignment and in August Terracon began soil borings to allow for better design of the needed pedestrian bridge abutments. Positive discussions have been had with Linn-Mar regarding a potential easement location through their property, that could involve the replacement of their pedestrian bridge over Indian Creek. Following a meeting with the Morrissey's in the beginning of January, additional alignments are being investigated to ensure a good user experience of the trail, while being optimistic about voluntary land/easement acquisition for the trail through their property.

10th Avenue Side paths (35th Street to Eagleview Drive)

Fully funded, awaiting funding availability in 2020.

MISD Safe Routes to Schools Trail

Following the commitment of funds to secure the Wellmark Foundation MATCH Grant (total \$146,529.75 project funds). Engineering staff is completing design and costs estimates in house with feedback from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee where warranted.

DRAINAGE EASEMENT / HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENTS

- Five (5) applications were processed / issued in November 2019 (61 YTD)