

CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
August 19, 2026

Notice and agenda of a regular Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting at 7:00 p.m. to be held in the City Hall Council Chambers, 519 Washington Ave. Zoning Board of Appeals members unable to attend the meeting are requested to contact the Planning Department at 616-935-3276 prior to the meeting.

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL: Tyler Berg, Vice-Chair Paul Shibley, Richard Norton, Kerry Bridges, Amy Kozanecki, Alternate Oliver Shampine

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 15, 2026

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

5. CALL TO AUDIENCE – ONE OF TWO OPPORTUNITIES

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. **Case 26-08:** A request by Elissa Schwartz related to a new single-family dwelling at vacant lot off Jackson Avenue (parcel #70-03-20-282-004) subject to the following variances: A variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for total lot coverage of 39.75% instead of the required 35%; and a variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for a rear yard setback of 12 ft. instead of the required 15 ft. in the OT - Old Town District.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Officers

8. CITY PLANNER REPORT

9. ZBA MEMBER COMMENTS

10. CALL TO AUDIENCE – SECOND OPPORTUNITY

11. ADJOURNMENT

**DRAFT - ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
MEETING MINUTES**

July 15, 2026

A regular meeting of the Grand Haven Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order by Vice Chair Shibley at 7:00 p.m. in the Grand Haven Council Chambers. On roll call, the following members were:

Present: Kerry Bridges, Amy Kozanecki, Vice-Chair Paul Shibley, Alternate Oliver Shampine

Absent: Tyler Berg, Richard Norton, Brendan Pool

Also present: Brian Urquhart, City Planner

Vice-Chair Shibley announced there was 4 members of the ZBA present and a quorum has been met. However, all 4 members must vote in favor to be approved. Shibley asked the applicants if they wanted to pursue the variance during the meeting or wait until next month for a full board in attendance. Both applicants, Cindy Damanchuk and Ken Kampenga, elected to move forward with the variance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Shampine, seconded by Norton, to approve the June 15, 2026 minutes as written. Passed unanimously with a voice vote.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Hills, seconded by Shibley,

Call to the Audience – None

Case 26-06: A request by Dick's Towing & Recovery Inc. related to the reconstruction of a building at 321 N. 7th St. (parcel #70-03-21-305-010) for a variance from Sec. 40-411.02.G: to allow ground floor building transparency of 20%, where the minimum ground floor building transparency of a primary wall is 60% in the NMU - Neighborhood Mixed-Use District.

Urquhart introduced the case. He said the approved appeal and variance for the building allowed for the applicant to come forward with a design of the office at Dick's towing. The NMU district places priority on exterior material and a minimum of 60% transparency of the primary walls in the form of clear glass. The applicant is requesting a reduction to 20% transparency due to the nature of the garage doors, and for energy efficiency and safety from road debris. Urquhart added the applicant can come before the Planning Commission

at any time for a site plan review, in which the Planning Commission can reduce the transparency percentage to 40%.

Chair Hills opened the public hearing at 7:05 pm.

Cindy Damnchuk presented her case.

Shibley asked about the strain of the glass on the door, with the garage door opening and closing frequently.

Kozanecki thought the primary wall should be at least 40% transparent.

Motion by Kozanecki, seconded by Shampine, to close the public hearing. Voice vote. All ayes. Public hearing closed at 7:25pm.

The board considered the seven basic conditions.

- A. Most members agreed a primary wall with 20% transparency in the NMU district did not contradict the intent or spirit of the ordinance. Kozanecki felt it was not met, and the applicant can design another building. Motion by Kozanecki, seconded by Bridges, to approve Basic Condition A. Yeas: Bridges, Shampine, Shibley. Nays: Kozanecki. Condition A **failed** on 3-1 roll call vote.
- B. All members agreed the use is a permitted use in the NMU district. Motion by Bridges, seconded by Shampine, to approve Basic Condition B. Condition B **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- C. All members agreed the 20% transparency of the office and garage building would not create any substantial adverse effect on properties in the adjacent vicinity. Motion by Shampine, seconded by Kozanecki, to approve Basic Condition C. Condition C **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- D. Kozanecki and Bridges felt the proposed property is somewhat general in nature and there are plenty of buildings in the NMU district that have greater transparency than the 20% requested. Shampine and Shibley did not agree. Motion by Shampine, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition D. Yeas: Shampine, Shibley. Nays: Bridges, Kozanecki. Condition D **failed** on a 2-2 roll call vote.
- E. Most members agreed the garage addition was not an act of self-creation. Kozanecki felt the applicant can design a building with a primary wall transparency of at least 60%, or apply for a reduction of 40% to the Planning Commission during site plan review. Motion by Shampine, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition E. Yeas: Bridges, Shampine, Shibley. Nays: Kozanecki. Condition E **failed** on a 3-1 roll call vote.
- F. All members agreed there was no reasonable alternative for the location for the transparency request. Motion by Bridges, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition F. Condition F **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- G. Shampine and Shibley believed the variance for 20% transparency was the minimum necessary. Kozanecki and Bridges did not agree and felt the applicant can install additional glass to increase the transparency. It was restated the setback variance was approved, but the standards for building form shall need to be met.

Motion by Shampine, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition G. Yeas: Shampine, Shibley. Nays: Kozanecki, Bridges. Condition G **failed** 2-2 on a roll call vote.

Motion by Shampine, seconded by Shibley, to APPROVE Case 26-06, A request by Dick's Towing & Recovery Inc. related to the reconstruction of a building at 321 N. 7th St. (parcel #70-03-21-305-010) for a variance from Sec. 40-411.02.G: to allow ground floor building transparency of 20%, where the minimum ground floor building transparency of a primary wall is 60% in the NMU - Neighborhood Mixed-Use District, based on the fact basic conditions A through G were met.

Yeas: Shibley, Shampine. Nays: Kozanecki, Bridges. The variance was **NOT APPROVED** on a 2-2 vote.

Case 26-07: A request by Ken and Suzanne Kampenga for a lot split at 1200 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-456-001), a variance from Sec. 40-409.02.C to allow a lot area of 5,735 sq. ft. where the minimum lot area in the E - Eastown Zoning District is 5,900 sq. ft.

Urquhart introduced the case. He said the Kampengas purchased the property in late 2025 with intentions to make improvements. The applicants then sought the possibility of splitting the parcel due to the larger size with respect to neighboring properties. Urquhart noted the parcel could only be split in a way that resulted in a parcel less than 5,900 sq. ft. minimum. Urquhart said the case was rather straight forward as the variance request was for a property meeting 98% of the lot size in the Eastown district, noting this was a minimum variance that was not self-created.

Ken Kampenga, 17275 Colfax St. West Olive, said they purchased the property because it was in desperate need of repair. The large lot lent itself to being split.

Suzanne Kampenga, 17275 Colfax West Olive, said if the variance is approved, and the lot split occurs, they would sell one of the parcels and rent out the other.

Motion by Kozanecki, seconded by Bridges, to close the public hearing. Voice vote. All ayes.

Public hearing closed at 7:46pm.

The board considered the seven basic conditions.

- A. All members agreed the lot split resulting in a parcel that meets 98% of the required minimum lot size in the Eastown district would not compromise the intent of the ordinance. Motion by Kozanecki, seconded by Bridges, to approve Basic Condition A. Condition A **passed** unanimously on a roll call vote.
- B. All members agreed the lot split would not result in a use that is not permitted, provided the shed is removed or a new home built on the split parcel. Motion by

Bridges, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition B. Condition B **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.

- C. All members agreed the variance to allow a 5,735 sq. ft. parcel would not be substantially adverse on properties within the immediate vicinity. Motion by Shampine, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition C. Condition C **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- D. All members agreed the property was unique with a total parcel size of 11,616 sq. ft. and that it was large enough to be split and maintain the minimum lot width and create conforming setbacks, but could not be split in any way to meet the 5,900 sq. ft. There were also other parcels much smaller than 5,900 sq. ft. in the area. Motion by Shampine, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition D. Condition D **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- E. All members agreed the condition or situation of the property was not a result of the applicant. The applicant purchased the lot and desired to make improvements but did not create any standards for lot size in the Eastown district. Motion by Bridges, seconded by Shampine, to approve Basic Condition E. Condition E **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- F. All members agreed there was no reasonable alternative for this variance. Motion by Shampine, seconded by Kozanecki, to approve Basic Condition F. Condition F **passed** unanimously on roll call vote.
- G. All members agreed the request for lot split resulting in a lot size of 5,735 sq. ft. or a parcel meeting 98% of the minimum, lot size would be minimum necessary to approve the variance. Members commented that other parcels existed nearby that were smaller in size. Motion by Bridges, seconded by Shibley, to approve Basic Condition G. Condition G **passed** unanimously on a roll call vote.

Motion by Bridges, seconded by Shibley, to APPROVE Case 26-07, a request by Ken and Suzanne Kampenga for a lot split at 1200 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-456-001), a variance from Sec. 40-409.02.C to allow a lot area of 5,735 sq. ft. where the minimum lot area in the E - Eastown Zoning District is 5,900 sq. ft. based on the fact basic conditions a through g were met, and subject to the following condition:

1. *The existing shed is removed, or a principal structure is installed on the property within 12 months.*

Yeas: Bridges, Kozanecki, Shibley, Shampine. Nays: None. The variance was **APPROVED** on a 4-0 vote.

Election of Officers – The ZBA agreed to postpone the election of officers to the next meeting so those members not in attendance could be involved.

City Planner Report – Urquhart reminded the ZBA of an August meeting and asked if they were able to attend.

Call to the Audience – Second Opportunity

None

Adjournment:

Motion by Kozanecki, seconded by Shampine, to adjourn. Unanimously approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Brian Urquhart, City Planner

STAFF REPORT

TO: Grand Haven Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Brian Urquhart, City Planner
MEETING DATE: August 19, 2026
CASE: 26-08
ADDRESS: Vacant lot at 317 Jackson Ave.

Proposal

Elissa Schwartz of 2655 Grand Castle Blvd. Grandville, MI submitted a zoning board of appeals application related to a new single-family dwelling on the vacant lot at 317 Jackson Ave. (parcel #70-03-20-282-004) for a variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for a total lot coverage of 39.75% instead of the required 35% and a rear yard setback of 12 ft. instead of the required 15 ft. in the Old Town zoning district.

Background

Elissa Schwartz purchased the vacant lot in February 2026. According to property records, the property was home to a large sign owned by the previous owner Kammeraad Trust. In May 1998, a windstorm knocked over the nonconforming sign. According to city records, in September 1998 the Zoning Board of Appeals denied a variance to continue the nonconforming use and location of the sign. The lot has sat vacant since.

Development has occurred recently with a two-family home built directly to the west, and the corner lot of 3rd and Jackson Ave. was approved for a two-family dwelling earlier this year. The lot is very challenging with Jackson Ave. traffic, and the shape and layout for a home to meet Old Town district setbacks. The survey depicts the parcel as land includes parts a lots 8 and 9 of Block 3 of Akeley's addition that lies south of the curved Westerly line of the Former CXS railroad ROW.



317 Jackson vacant lot

The lot is unusually shaped due to the railroad right-of-way. The western lot line measures 90 ft., then the south lot line measures 132 ft. The rectangular corner provides for a standard building envelope. However, the curved rear lot line measures 154.97 ft. in length and varies from a depth of 10.35 ft. from Jackson Ave. in the northeast corner, and 90.82 ft. in the northwest corner. The lot meets the minimum lot width of 45 ft. and lot area of 5,900 sq. ft. in Old Town district at 132 ft. and 7,297 sq. ft. respectively. The applicant expressed concern about the shape when purchasing the property, denoting the shape and driveway location off Jackson Ave. A single-family dwelling is permitted by right in OT district, and some relief may be required for longstanding vacant parcels.

The plan calls for a 2,927 sq. ft. home, with a new driveway located near the eastern portion of the lot. All setbacks are met aside from the rear yard setback where part of the home measures 12 ft. Total lot coverage equates to 39.75%, above the required 35%. Lot coverage is defined as all structures and roofed patios, decks.

1.0 Zoning of Subject Parcel

The property is located in the OT – Old Town District

2.0 General Location

Entire lot

3.0 Existing Land Use on the Parcel

Vacant

4.0 Adjacent Area Land Uses

North: Parking lot for 333 Jackson
South: Residential
East: Commercial use
West: Residential

5.0 Zoning on Adjacent Parcels

North: OT – Old Town
South: OT – Old Town
East: OT – Old Town
West: OT – Old Town

6.0 Findings of Fact and Staff Analysis

The applicant has provided responses to the Basic Conditions for the requested variance.

1. **Basic Conditions:** The Board shall find that a variance request meets all of the following conditions with respect to the 12 ft. rear yard setback:
 - a. *The requested variance shall not be contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of the Ordinance. **Comment: A setback of 12 ft. instead of the required 15 ft. that is adjacent to lawn area instead of a neighboring residential use would likely not be considered contrary to the public interest.***
 - b. *The requested variance shall not permit the establishment within a district of any use which is not permitted by right within that zone district, or any use or dimensional variance for which a special land use permit is required. **Comment: The granting of this variance will not establish a use which is not permitted. Single-family dwellings are permitted by right.***
 - c. *The requested variance shall not cause a substantial adverse effect upon properties in the immediate vicinity or in the district in which the property of the applicant is located.*

Comment: A rear yard setback of 12 ft. located in two small portions of the entire length of the rear setback line would not create a substantial adverse effect upon properties in the immediate vicinity.

- d. *The conditions or situation of the property or its intended use is not so general or recurrent in nature as to make reasonably practicable a general regulation for the condition or situation.* Comment: Parcel #70-03-20-282-002 is unusual because of its shape and location on Jackson Ave. The property historically was used for off premise signage, which did not receive approval to continue as a nonconforming structure. For nearly 30 years, land around this property has been developed into residential homes, utilizing the limited vacant lots remaining in the City. The property is not so general or recurrent in nature.
 - e. *Any exceptional or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property in question are not self-created.* Comment: The applicant purchased the property in 2026 and did not create any changes to the lot shape and size. The parcel was platted with the railroad right-of-way, and once the railroad ceased operations and right-of-way vacated, the parcel was left within an unusual shape in the Old Town district, which the zoning permitted residential uses. The applicant did not create this exception circumstance.
 - f. *There is no reasonable alternative location on the parcel for the proposed improvements for which a variance is sought where such alternative location would eliminate the need for the requested variance or reduce the extent of the condition(s) necessitating the variance.* Comment: The proposed building plans take advantage of the building envelope near the western side of the property. The rear walls tier back as much as possible to stay within 15 ft. setback. A home is designed with a rectangular shape, and the curvilinear shape creates areas where the setback is reduced. The proposed improvements appear to be the most reasonable location, thus necessitating the variance request.
 - g. *The requested variance is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the improvement.* Comment: A 12 ft. setback instead of the 15 ft. setback is a 3 ft. or 20% reduction from the required setback. The 12 ft. setback appears in two separate locations and does not extend the entire width of the home.
2. **Basic Conditions:** The Board shall find that a variance request meets all of the following conditions with respect to the 39.75% lot coverage.
- h. *The requested variance shall not be contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of the Ordinance.* Comment: Lot coverage regulates the bulk and capacity of a lot. The 35% is standard and allows for use of a home and detached accessory buildings. The request for 39.75% on the vacant lot appears not to be contrary to the purpose of the ordinance.
 - i. *The requested variance shall not permit the establishment within a district of any use which is not permitted by right within that zone district, or any use or dimensional variance for which a special land use permit is required.* Comment: The granting of this variance will not establish a use which is not permitted.
 - j. *The requested variance shall not cause a substantial adverse effect upon properties in the immediate vicinity or in the district in which the property of the applicant is located.* Comment: The home size and design takes advantage of the larger building envelope on the western portion of the parcel. The additional 4.75% of lot coverage does not reduce the

setback near the neighboring residence to the west, nor reduce the front yard setback. The proposed lot coverage does not appear to create any adverse conditions on neighboring properties.

- k. *The conditions or situation of the property or its intended use is not so general or recurrent in nature as to make reasonably practicable a general regulation for the condition or situation.* Comment: As mentioned earlier, parcel #70-03-20-282-002 is unusual because of its shape and location from Jackson Ave. The property is not so general or recurrent in nature.
- l. *Any exceptional or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property in question are not self-created.* Comment: Also mentioned earlier, the applicant purchased the property in 2026 and did not create the lot size nor create any other nonconformity. However, as a vacant lot, a home could be designed to include the necessary improvements that stays within 35% total lot coverage. The area of the home is planned for 2,927 sq. ft., which includes a garage and front porch. 35% lot coverage would allow for a 2,577 sq. ft. building footprint, which includes required front porch and offers appropriate living space for the applicant. It could be considered the lot coverage request is self-created.
- m. *There is no reasonable alternative location on the parcel for the proposed improvements for which a variance is sought where such alternative location would eliminate the need for the requested variance or reduce the extent of the condition(s) necessitating the variance.* Comment: Lot coverage would not directly apply to a specific location. The standard appears to be met.
- n. *The requested variance is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the improvement.* Comment: 39.75% lot coverage is 4.75% more than the maximum, which is approximately 12% increase. The 4.75% increase could be considered the minimum necessary.

7.0 Correspondence

As of the date of this memo, no comments have been received regarding this request.

8.0 Sample Motions

A concurring vote of 4 members of the Zoning Board of Appeals is required to approve a non-use variance.

Rear yard setback:

Motion to **APPROVE** ZBA Case 26-08a, A request by Elissa Schwartz related to a new single-family dwelling at vacant lot off Jackson Avenue (parcel #70-03-20-282-004) for a variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for a rear yard setback of 12 ft. instead of the required 15 ft. in the OT - Old Town District. The variance is granted based on the following finding(s) of fact:

1. *Insert ZBA finding(s) of fact.*

Motion to **DENY** ZBA CASE 26-08a, a request by Elissa Schwartz related to a new single-family dwelling at vacant lot off Jackson Avenue (parcel #70-03-20-282-004) for a variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for a rear yard setback of 12 ft. instead of the required 15 ft. in the OT - Old Town District based on the following reasons:

1. *Insert reasons for denial.*

Motion to **POSTPONE** ZBA Case 26-08a, until the following information can be submitted for review:

1. *Insert ZBA recommendation(s).*

Lot coverage

Motion to **APPROVE** ZBA Case 26-08b, A request by Elissa Schwartz related to a new single-family dwelling at vacant lot off Jackson Avenue (parcel #70-03-20-282-004) for a variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for total lot coverage of 39.75% instead of the required 35% in the OT – Old Town district. The variance is granted based on the following finding(s) of fact:

2. *Insert ZBA finding(s) of fact.*

Motion to **DENY** ZBA CASE 26-08b, a request by Elissa Schwartz related to a new single-family dwelling at vacant lot off Jackson Avenue (parcel #70-03-20-282-004) for a variance from Sec. 40-410.02.C for total lot coverage of 39.75% instead of the required 35% in the OT – Old Town district.

2. *Insert reasons for denial.*

Motion to **POSTPONE** ZBA Case 26-08b, until the following information can be submitted for review:

Insert ZBA recommendation(s)

Attachments:

- A. ZBA application dated July 22, 2026
- B. Variance responses
- C. Site plan and surveys

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

Community Development Department, City of Grand Haven

519 Washington Avenue, Grand Haven, MI 49417

Phone: (616) 935-3276 Website: www.grandhaven.org



1. Project Information

To the Zoning Board of Appeals;

I (we) Elissa Koopmans Schwartz of 2655 Grand Castle Blvd SW, #T0312
(Applicant Name) (Street Number)

Grandville Michigan 49418
(City) (State & Zip Code)

Applicant Phone Number: 248-835-9944 Applicant Fax Number: None

HEREBY APPEAL TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS FOR A:

Variance ☒ Appeal ☐ Interpretation ☐ Change of Nonconforming Use ☐

Address/location of property: V/L Jackson, Grand Haven, Michigan 49417

Parcel #: 70-03-20-282-004 Zoning District: Old Town

2. Required Attachments

- 5 copies of site plan
- 5 copies of the application
- 5 copies of written response demonstrating how the request meets the 7 Basic Conditions
- Required fee (\$350 or \$450* if construction has begun)

3. Description of Case (fill out only the items that apply to your case)

A. Description of the property

- 1) Size of lot 132.00' x 90.72 x 154.97' x 10.35' per the surveyor
- 2) Area of lot 7,405.2 square feet per RE/MAX West Listing; 7,364 square feet per my architectural draftsman
- 3) Is lot a corner or interior lot interior lot

B. Description of existing structures:

- 1) Number of buildings now on premises 0
- 2) Size of each building now on premises _____
- 3) Use of existing buildings on premises _____

C. Description of proposed structures:

- 1) Height of proposed structure _____
- 2) Dimensions of proposed building or addition 75' x 55' x 67'8" x 53' (the 53' is for walls facing east)
- 3) Area of proposed building 2,927 square feet, including garage and front porch
- 4) Percentage of lot coverage of building or addition 39.75%



D. Yard setbacks after completion of building or addition:

- 1) Front yard (measured from lot line) 10 feet
- 2) Side yard (measured from lot line) 6 feet on west side and 10 feet on east side (16 feet total)
- 3) Rear yard (measured from lot line) 12 feet

E. A sketch depicting the above information shall accompany this application. The sketch shall be on a sheet of paper 8 1/2" x 11" in size.

F. Article and Section number of Zoning Ordinance that is being appealed: Art. IV, Sec. 40-410.02

G. Clearly state your request: Please see attached.

4. The Board shall have the power to authorize, upon an appeal, specific variances from such requirements as lot area and width regulations, building height regulations, yard and depth regulations, and off-street parking and loading space requirements provided it finds that **all of the Basic Conditions** described below can be satisfied. The appellant shall submit, along with the established fee and other materials, a narrative demonstrating why a variance is sought.

A. Basic Conditions. The Board shall find that a variance request meets **all** of the following conditions.

- 1) The requested variance shall not be contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.
- 2) The requested variance shall not permit the establishment within a district of any use which is not permitted by right within that zone district, or any use or dimensional variance for which a special land use permit is required.
- 3) The requested variance shall not cause a substantial adverse effect upon properties in the immediate vicinity or in the district in which the property of the applicant is located.
- 4) The conditions or situation of the property or its intended use is not so general or recurrent a nature as to make reasonably practicable a general regulation for the condition or situation.
- 5) Any exceptional or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property in question are not self-created.
- 6) There is no reasonable alternative location on the parcel for the proposed improvements for which a variance is sought where such alternative location would eliminate the need for the requested variance or reduce the extent of the condition(s) necessitating the variance.
- 7) The requested variance is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the improvement.

Section 40-113.08 (B)(3) states the following (*See Section for additional Rules*):

1. Each variance granted under the provisions of this Ordinance shall become null and void unless: The construction authorized by such variance has received a City Land Use Permit within one (1)



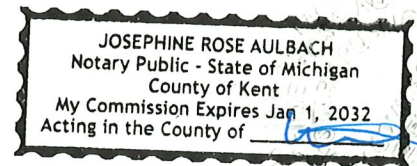
year after the granting of the variance; and the occupancy of land, premises, or buildings authorized by the variance has taken place within one (1) year after the issuance of the Land Use Permit, unless an extension of time has been granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Zoning Administrator may grant one six (6) month extension of construction. After expiration of a six (6) month extension, all extension shall be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

2. No application for a variance which has been denied wholly or in part by the Board shall be re-submitted for a period of one (1) year from the date of the last denial, except on the grounds of newly discovered evidence of changed conditions found, upon inspection by the Board, to be valid.

Signature of Owner: Elissa Koopmans Schwartz Date: July 22, 2026

Print Name: Elissa Koopmans Schwartz

Subscribed and sworn before me on this 22nd day of July, 2026
My Commission expires on: 01/01/2032
[Signature]
Notary Public



Specific Variance Requests and Basis for Each Request for 0 Jackson, Grand Haven, MI

By way of introduction, the main impetus for my requests 1) to enlarge the first-floor footprint of my home from 35% set forth in the ordinance to 39.75% set forth in the proposed site plan and 2) to decrease the rear setback requirement from 15 feet to 12 feet at the places where the proposed home crosses over the 15-foot line, is wheelchair and walker accessibility. In June 2025, I fainted because my blood pressure fell too low and I broke my tibia and fibula in four places in my left ankle along with a ligament tearing. After surgery, it was necessary for me to use a wheelchair for the entire summer. By fall, I was using a walker most of the time instead of my wheelchair.

Even today, I find walking up and down stairs somewhat challenging because my ankle will never function as fully as it did before the breaks and tears. I have plates and screws attached, arthritis has set in due to damage and surgery, and nerves in my ankle and foot are not all operating properly. I also had no reason to think I would ever faint due to low blood pressure. In the blink of an eye, I went from seemingly being perfectly healthy to waking up on a sidewalk unable to stand up while waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

While the dosage for a medication I was taking for high blood pressure has been adjusted, giving me hope that I will not again faint due to low blood pressure, my experience taught me that anyone at anytime can find themselves in a position where due to almost anything, they are either temporarily or permanently unable to walk or to walk without assistance from a supportive device, such as a walker. So, I acknowledge I could find myself using a wheelchair or walker again at any point in time.

Whether it is using a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches, stairs are either impossible or potentially dangerous to use. It is for this reason that my home is designed for me to live entirely on the first floor. As you know, Code requires that I have a second floor over at least some of my first floor. Since my home must be built on a slab, I will use a portion of the second floor for storage, as the equivalent of a basement. There will be rooms for out-of-town guests, should I have them, as well as the utility room.

As to the specific Basic Conditions set forth in the Application being met, I will discuss them in relation to both the request to use 39.75% of my double lot for my first-floor footprint and the request to use three feet of the rear setback for my home in the places specified on the site plan simultaneously given both requests are based on my efforts to have the ability to live solely on the first floor of my home.

I do not believe my requests are contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of the Ordinance. The requested increase in square footage is approximately 350 square feet and the reduction in the rear setback is limited to specific areas at the back of the home. These variances are small enough to not cause my home to appear unusually large as compared to the size of the double lot. The yard that is not built upon with hardscape will be covered with flowering plants and other vegetation in the style of an English garden, including native plants designed to contribute to the health and wellbeing of pollinators. The extensive use of flowers will accentuate the broad use of color in the yard. My English garden will also serve to provide significant drainage capabilities.

Of the approximately 350 square foot increase, a portion of it is attributable to my concern for accessibility. My main hallway is 4'6" wide and my side hallway is 4' wide, wider than the traditional 3' – 3' 6" hallway, so as to easily accommodate a wheelchair. There is also a storage closet on the first floor so that it is not necessary for me to go to the storage rooms on the second floor.

My requested variances are not for the purpose of establishing any use that is not permitted or for a special land use that requires a separate permit. My variances relate specifically to the size of my home.

My requested variances shall not cause a substantial adverse effect upon properties in the immediate vicinity or in Old Town. My request for a rear setback adjustment does not affect any homeowner, as my rear lot line does not abut a backyard of any home. My rear lot line abuts a vacant piece of land covered in natural vegetation that is currently not being used for any habitable purpose and is a part of 333 Jackson, commercial property directly to my east. This piece of property, which has no direct access to a street, serves as a buffer zone between my rear lot line and the closest house

to the north of me, which is part of the condo development Pere Marquette Place with its entrance on 3rd Street.

Attached to this Application is a copy of a color photo provided to me by one of the owners of 333 Jackson, outlining the vacant land buffer zone in blue behind my property. It shows that an increased size of my house and a 12-foot rear setback would not impinge on the use of anyone else's property adjacent to the back side of my property. Further, I believe because my double lot is quite wide, the extra approximately 350 square feet will not be apparent to anyone looking at my home from the front. Both 309 Jackson and 333 Jackson are much deeper lots than mine, so for my home to extend up to three feet beyond my 15-foot setback will likely not be obviously noticeable to the owners of those properties.

The conditions or situations of my property are not so general or recurrent a nature as to make reasonably practicable a general regulation for it. As you can see from the attached survey, I have a highly unusual shape to the rear lot line, which also continues onto the east side of the property. I refer to it as a "half-rainbow" shape. It has made it challenging for my architectural draftsman to create rooms with straight walls that abut the curved rear setback line. My architectural draftsman has explained to me that it is beneficial for building purposes to have straight walls, rather than curved walls. Given curves can be at different angles, it is highly unlikely that special City-wide regulations can be created for such curves. While I have not researched the properties in Old Town, it is my general impression that the shape of the rear lot line and east side of my property is unique, not to be commonly found elsewhere in Old Town.

I have not self-created any exceptional or extraordinary circumstances applying to my property. The property came to me with its curvature along the north and east sides. It is clear by viewing the survey and site plan that the curvature creates a situation where my home must be designed in a "step" fashion, moving down the steps when going from west to east. By avoiding at the rear of the home having rooms with one curved (or diagonal) wall, you lose the ability to use some property within the setback requirement for those same rooms. So, property that falls outside the 15-foot setback remains unbuilt upon in order to have straight walls on all four sides of a room. In addition, my

accessibility concerns, causing me to design certain areas of my home larger than would otherwise be done, are not self-created, as the nature of a wheelchair is the determining factor.

My architectural draftsman and I have spent extensive time attempting to design my home to fit within the 35% footprint and 15-foot rear setback requirements to no reasonable avail. As set forth above, he explained to me that curved or diagonal walls are not ideal, and I am hesitant to make the home smaller in case I find myself again someday using a wheelchair that takes more space to move and turn around in than walking does. I do not believe there is a reasonable alternative location or mechanism that accomplishes the purposes for which the design is created.

It is my opinion that the requested variances are the minimum variances that will make possible the reasonable use of the improvement. The requested increase in square footage coverage is only approximately 350 square feet and the requested reduction of the rear setback to 12 feet will only be utilized in limited areas along the north side of the home.

While the Application instructions do not request a copy of the floor plan, if you believe your analysis of my requests would benefit by seeing the floor plan for the first floor, please contact me and I will immediately email a copy to any email address you indicate.

As an aside, I would like to briefly discuss my driveway, sidewalks, and backyard patio, all designed to be made with concrete. I am aware that the City of Grand Haven is, as is reasonable, interested in proper water drainage on properties. Therefore, there is an interest in balancing hardscapes that are not permeable with softscapes that are permeable. I know there is an Ordinance indicating the concrete in a front yard cannot take up more than 50% of the property that comprises the front yard, and I do not believe my use of concrete in the front yard exceeds 50%, but if you believe I am incorrect and determine the space designated for my driveway and sidewalks would be a violation as drawn, then I request a variance for my proposed plan for the front yard sidewalks and driveway.

I have elected to use concrete over permeable materials such as mulch, pebbles, or pavers because of safe accessibility. If I again find myself in a wheelchair or using a walker, I want a surface that is flat, even, smooth, and immovable. I understand that over time even concrete can lose one or more of these properties. If that happens, I would need to replace the damaged section. I also would want the ability to move around the entire exterior perimeter of the home in a wheelchair, which is why I have the front sidewalk connect to a sidewalk along the west side of my home and rear sidewalks connect to the doors to my courtyard and garage, as well as to my driveway.

I have a two-stall garage. Therefore, I have a driveway that is for a two-stall garage. Also, because Jackson is an extremely busy street, it is unsafe to attempt to back out onto Jackson from my driveway. Therefore, the driveway is wide enough out from the garage to allow my guests or me to turn our vehicles around to go out onto Jackson facing forward, which will avoid potential accidents with pedestrians and other vehicles.

I have two doors at the front of my home - the front door and the laundry room door. They both have sidewalks that connect to the sidewalk that connects to the driveway, which is normal to see with houses. I have a patio and a courtyard adjacent to each other in the backyard. As I mentioned above, my landscape will be in the style of an English garden. Therefore, I am using the edges of the sidewalks, driveway, and patio to be the edging for all the many garden beds that will hold my flowering plants. With the exception of the patio and courtyard, there are garden beds along the perimeter of the home so there will be flowers and plants between the home and the sidewalks. A substantial amount of the rear, front, and east sides of my yard will be garden beds and so drainage will be prevalent. I believe drainage will be sufficient as well on the west side of the home because of the garden bed running along the entire length of the home.

If I need a variance for my sidewalks and driveway (and patio, if there are any regulations on concrete use in the backyard), then I make the following statements regarding the Basic Conditions. I believe because of the many garden beds on my property that the variance would not be contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of any pertinent Ordinance. The requested variance shall not establish any use which is not permitted by right or any use for which a special land use permit is required.

I do not believe my sidewalks, rear patio, and driveway will cause a substantial adverse effect upon properties in the immediate vicinity or in Old Town. The driveway for 309 Jackson is adjacent to my west lot line, so me having a sidewalk on the other side of the existing 4-foot-high fence erected by the owners of 309 Jackson is not likely to be a concern for them. As discussed above, the property adjacent to my rear lot line to the north and as it extends onto the east side is a buffer zone of vacant land upon which natural vegetation is growing. That part of 333 Jackson is not inhabited and the nearest house north of me is quite far away from my backyard. The backyard of 309 Jackson that is adjacent to my backyard is the parking pad for the property, so my rear sidewalk near to the mutual lot line should not be of any concern given it abuts their parking area. As for my driveway, it seems highly unlikely it would be of any concern to the owners of 333 Jackson given it is commercial property with a parking lot and driveway that are much larger than my driveway.

Unless there are many homeowners in Old Town desirous of creating a large number of garden beds for an English garden from adjoining sidewalks, patios, and a driveway, along with being concerned about creating wheelchair accessibility around the perimeter of their houses, I would think that the situation of my property and its intended use is not so general or recurrent a nature as to make reasonably practicable a general regulation for the situation.

I have not self-created the circumstances applying to my property. The fact is that my property is very wide compared to most properties in Old Town, to the best of my knowledge. The width of my property by definition means that there will be a long distance between my driveway and my front door and between my driveway and my backyard patio. The distance from the front yard to the back yard on the west side is 55 feet, so that makes for a long sidewalk. It also makes for a 55-foot-long drainage area between the home and that sidewalk. I have not created the accessibility concerns for being able to circumnavigate the exterior perimeter of the home on a safe and secure surface for a wheelchair or walker.

For reasons that need no explanation beyond what has already been discussed, there is no reasonable alternative location on the parcel for the sidewalks, patio, and

driveway that would eliminate the need for the requested variance. This is the minimum variance that would allow me full exterior perimeter access in a wheelchair or walker that is safe and secure.

buffered
zone
is in
blue;
my
property
is in
green
and
yellowish
green



LOT CORNER

CHAINLINK FENCE ON LOT LINE 3' S. OF LOT CORNER

M=N21°50'02"E 90.72'

CHAINLINK FENCE

END OF FENCE 0.8' E. OF LOT LINE

BLOCK 3 AKELEY'S ADDITION

WLY LINE OF FORMER CSX RAILROAD R.O.W.
M=ARC 154.97'

CURVE 1
M=CURVE
R=439.17'
Δ=20°13'05"
A=154.97'
CH. BRG.=S36°43'32"E
CH. LEN.=154.17'

SW CORNER LOT 9, BLOCK 3, AKELEY'S ADD.

M=N68°09'24"W 132.00'

S'LY LINE BLK. 3 JACKSON ST.

M=S19°15'25"W 10.35'

M=3.99'



Scale 1"=20'
0' 10' 20'



DRAWING REVISED: MARCH 5, 2026
BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT

[Signature]
Brian A. Ford Professional Surveyor No. 4001047199

ABONMARCHE
MILANOWSKI AND ENGLERT
11 North 6th Street - Grand Haven, MI 49417
Phone(616)847-4070 Fax(616)847-6626

FOR ELISSA SCHWARTZ
Sec. 20, T.8N.,R.16W, CITY OF GRAND HAVEN

DATE FEBRUARY 25, 2026 DRAWN BY TV

SHEET 1 of 1 JOB NO. 17154 (26-0182)

This survey was made from the legal description shown above. The description should be compared with the Abstract Title or Title Insurance Policy for accuracy, easements and exceptions.

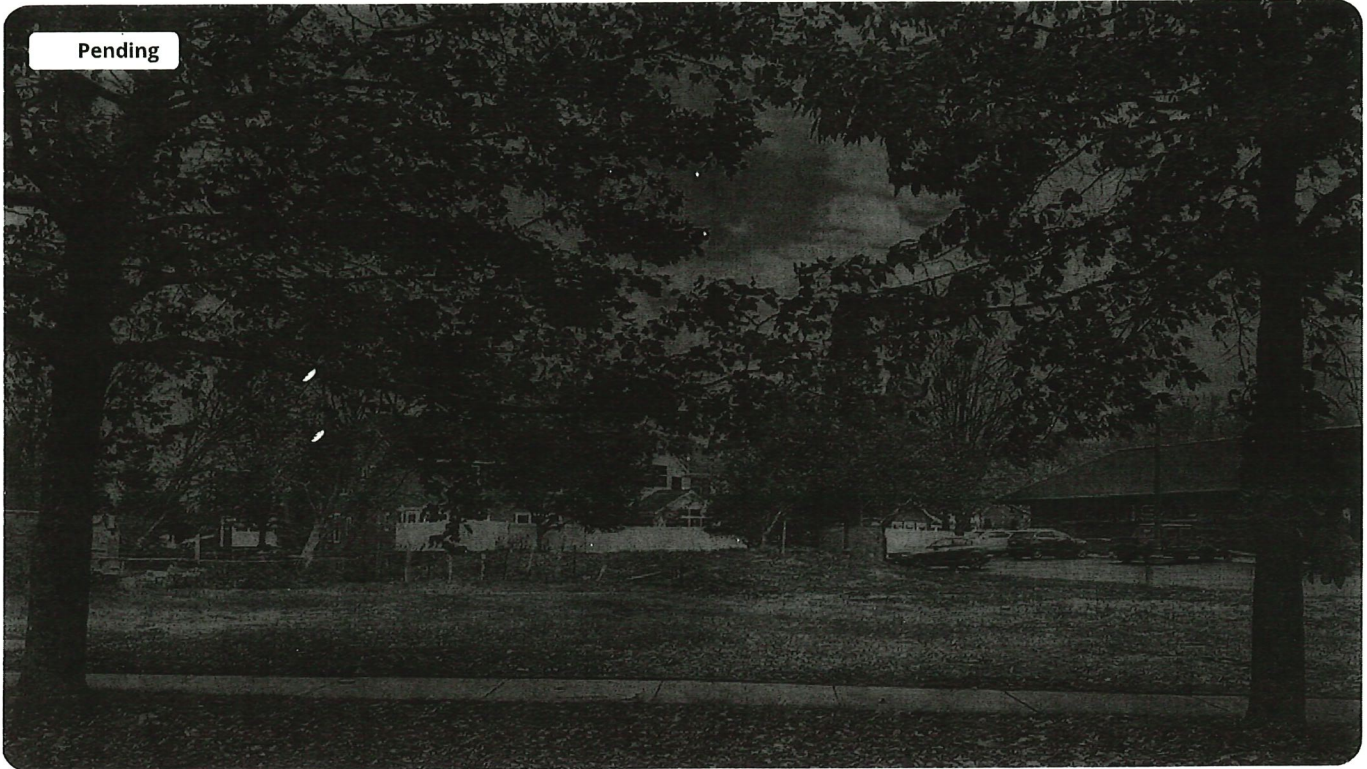
LEGEND

- SET CON. MON
- FOUND CONC. MON
- SET CAPPED IRON
- △ SET MAG NAIL
- FOUND IRON
- "X" SET CUT "X"
- P. PLATTED
- M. MEASURED
- D. DESCRIBED
- CALC. CALCULATED

< Back to search



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\$199,900

0 Jackson St, Grand Haven, MI 49417

--
beds

--
baths

7,405.2
Square Feet

Est.: \$1,204/mo Get pre-qualified



Land



Built in ----



7,405.2 Square Feet Lot



\$-- Zestimate®



\$--/sqft



\$-- HOA

What's special

VACANT LOT

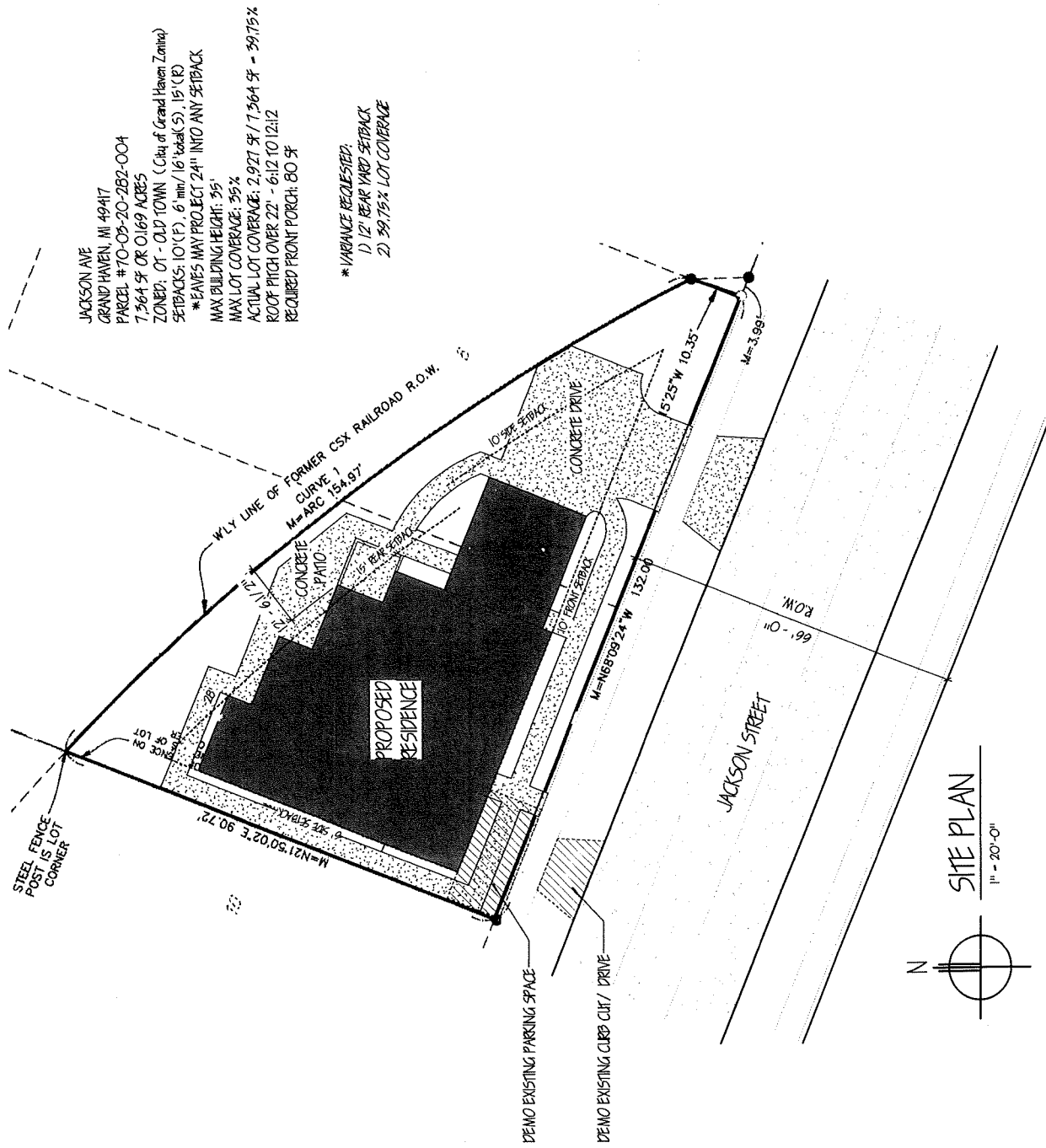
Location Location Location. This vacant lot is located within walking distance to downtown Grand Haven. So many possibilities for new buyers.

92 days on Zillow | 156 views | 5 saves

Zillow last checked: 3 hours ago

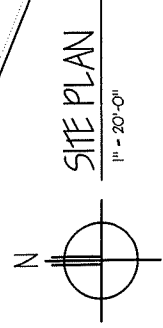
Listing updated: January 23, 2026 at 02:28pm

Also listed on [Realcomp II](#)



JACKSON AVE
 GRAND HAVEN, MI 49417
 PARCEL #70-03-20-282-004
 7.364 SF OR 0.169 ACRES
 ZONE: OT - OLD TOWN (City of Grand Haven Zoning)
 SETBACKS: 10'(F), 6' min/16' total(S), 15'(R)
 *EAVES MAY PROJECT 24" INTO ANY SETBACK
 MAX BUILDING HEIGHT: 35'
 MAX LOT COVERAGE: 35%
 ACTUAL LOT COVERAGE: 2,927 SF / 7,364 SF = 39.75%
 ROOF PITCH OVER 22' - 6:12 TO 12:12
 REQUIRED FRONT PORCH: 80 SF

*VARIANCE REQUESTED:
 1) 12' REAR YARD SETBACK
 2) 39.75% LOT COVERAGE



SITE PLAN

TO: City of Grand Haven Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Brian Urquhart, City Planner
MEETING DATE: August 19, 2026
TOPIC: Election of Officers

It has been since June 2025 since the ZBA elected officers. With terms being renewed at the end of this month, now would be an opportune time to elect officers for the next 11 months.

Currently the officers are:

Chair – Vacant
Vice Chair – Paul Shibley
Secretary – Brendan Pool