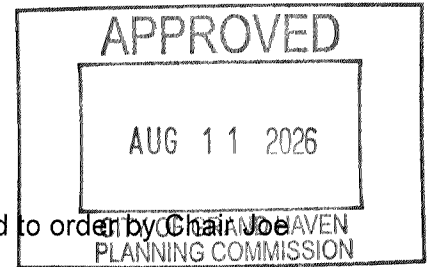


**CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026**



The regular meeting of the Grand Haven Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Joe Pierce at 7:00 pm. Upon roll call, the following members were present:

Present: Amy Kozanecki, Chair Joe Pierce, Dan Borchers, Scott Blakeney, Tamera Owens, Vice Chair Jennifer Smelker, Secretary Magda Smolenska

Absent:

Also Present: City Planner Brian Urquhart, Mayor Bob Monetza, City Manager Ashley Latsch, Assistant City Manager Dana Kollwehr, and members of the public.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by **Smelker**, seconded by **Kozanecki**, to approve the minutes of the June 09, 2026, meeting.

All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Approval of Agenda

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve the agenda.

All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Call to the Audience: First Opportunity

Gerald Andre, Jr, 902 Elliott Ave, brought up concerns regarding an alleyway on Elliott Ave.

Public Hearings

A. Case 26-23: Special land use request for a two-family dwelling at 20 N. Despelder St. (parcel #70-03-21-379-002)

Urquhart presented the case. Josh Brugger submitted an application for special land use for a two-family dwelling. This is a corner lot at Columbus and Despelder. Two family dwellings as it's currently written are permitted by special land use in the East Town District. After purchasing the home last year, Mr. Brugger had questions from the city regarding demoing the existing structure, because of the condition, and constructing a two-family dwelling.

The parcel is technically one and half lots and is conforming in regard to parcel size and lot width. The two-family dwelling meets all the standards for lot coverage, setbacks, height, building form, standard, and parking. One unit would be a larger unit with a driveway while the other unit would be smaller with no driveway.

There were calls regarding this public hearing, but no formal correspondence has been received for this request.

Josh Brugger, the applicant, spoke regarding potential renters, his plans for the two-family unit, and the possibility of raising the grade on the Columbus side to get rid of the big drop off and make it level.

Chair Pierce opened the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Bob Monetza, 945 Washington Ave, spoke regarding his thoughts on the need for the property to be demoed and the appropriateness of a two-family dwelling going up in that lot.

Motion by **Smelker**, seconded by **Kozanecki**, to close the public hearing.

All ayes.

Public Hearing closed at 7:17 p.m.

No discussion between commissioners took place.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve case 26-23, a request for a Special Use Permit for a two-family dwelling located at 20 N. Despelder (parcel #70-03-21-379-002) based on the information submitted for review.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Smolenska, Blakeney, Smelker, Pierce

Nays:

Motion passed

B. Case 26-24: Special land use request for a retaining wall greater than 48 inches in height at 1540 Marion Ave. (parcel #70-03-27-154-002)

Urquhart presented the case. Jon Newmyer of Polyply Composites submitted a special land use request for the retaining wall located behind the new addition at the PolyPly facility off of Marion Ave. The retaining wall is necessary for the fire access lane due to the natural slope and topography of the property. The retaining wall is greater than 48 inches in height making it subject to site plan approval.

No correspondence has been received from the public regarding this request.

Steve, Zadwig, from Abonmarche, was present on behalf of Polyply to answer any questions.

Chair Galligan opened the public hearing at 7:23 p.m.

No one spoke.

Motion by **Owens**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to close the public hearing.

All ayes.

Public Hearing closed at 7:23 p.m.

No discussion between commissioners took place.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Kozanecki**, to approve case 26-24, a special land use permit for a retaining wall that exceeds 48 inches in height at 1540 Marion Ave. (parcel #70-03-27-154-002), based on the information submitted for review

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Smelker, Smolenska, Blakeney, Owens, Borchers, Kozanecki, Pierce

Nays:

Motion passed.

New Business

Smolenska recused herself for the following two cases.

A. Case 26-25: Pre application for site plan review for 5-dwelling unit addition to 211-213 Washington Ave. (parcels #70-03-20-432-011 & #70-03-20-432-012)

Urquhart presented the case. Kirsten Runchske of Architektura, on behalf of property owner BBH LLC, has submitted a layout plan, conceptual plan and elevation plan details for the proposed residential above retail development at 211-213 Washington Ave.

211 Washington Ave. is a two-story structure, with residential units above the retail space. 213 Washington Ave. is a single-story structure currently the home of Blueberry Haven. The proposal is to demolish both buildings and construct one building, continuing the retail space on the ground level for each along with 5 residential dwelling units on the 2nd and 3rd stories. The property will include 2nd and 3rd story patios, and decks over Washington Ave.,

The property has an elevator shaft that would be counted towards the building height. They are also required to provide six parking spaces. To do this they have proposed a three car garage with the capability of having a lift. The retail spaces would utilize the off-street public spaces.

Kirsten Runchske of Architektura spoke to commissioners regarding the details of the project including the added green space and layout/type of units that will be available. She also answered Commissioners questions regarding the alleyway between the proposed building and the neighboring one.

Discussion revolved around the alleyway, the material for siding, MSDDA guidelines, and the encroachment of the overhanging balconies.

This case will be brought forward for a formal review at the August 2026 meeting.

B. Case 26-26: Pre-public hearing discussion of Chinook Pier development proposal

Urquhart presented the case. The zoning ordinance in the Waterfront District requires special land use for certain types of uses, and that includes retail. The Chinook Pier development proposal shows a retail office and an eating/drinking establishment. Planning Commission will need to do a site plan review, special land use and sensitive area overlay.

Motion by **Kozanecki**, seconded by **Smelker**, to request a public hearing be scheduled for case 26-26 at our August 11, 2026, meeting.

All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Old Business

None.

Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Report

Kozanecki stated there was a Zoning Board Meeting in June 2026. They approved a request for an existing garage that was non-conforming and they also approved a special use permit for Dick's Towing. She also stated their next meeting will be on July 15 and they have two setback variances on the agenda.

City Planner Report

Urquhart gave updates regarding the Center Town Vision Plan, the hotel, the possibility of a work session in August 2026, and the recommendation from the ZBA that the Planning Commission comes up with a definition for an automobile towing and recovery company. He also mentioned the public hearing that resulted in a tie vote in May will be heard again at the August 2026 meeting.

Call to the Audience: Second Opportunity

Mayor Bob Monetza, 945 Washington Ave, thanked commissioners for their feedback regarding the Chinook Pier plan that was presented during the work session.

Gerald Andre, Jr, 902 Elliott Ave, applauded commissioners and asked that they watch parking and make sure there is enough parking for handicapped people.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by **Chair Pierce** at 8:04 p.m.



Amy Vos, Deputy City Clerk