

**CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2025**



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

Present: Amy Kozanecki, Joe Pierce, Dan Borchers, Vice-Chair Ryan Galligan, Tamera Owens, Jennifer Smelker, David Skelly, Magda Smolenska, Chair Mike Dora.

Absent: None

Also Present: City Planner Brian Urquhart, Mayor Bob Monetza, City Manager Ashley Latsch, Assistant City Manager Dana Kollwehr, and Project Management Director Derek Gajdos.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by **Skelly**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2025, meeting, and the April 30, 2025, Joint DDA Meeting. All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Approval of Agenda

Motion by **Vice-Chair Galligan**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to approve the agenda without the need to continue the work session.

All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Call to the Audience: First Opportunity:

Peter Wilson, 322 Washington, spoke regarding his concerns surrounding the Centertown Overlay.

Public Hearing:

Case 25-21: A special land use permit for telecommunication tower at 207 Emmet St. (parcel #70-03-29-160-004).

Urquhart introduced the case. Derek Gajdos submitted a special land use application for a telecommunication tower at the top of 5-mile hill near 207 Emmet St. (parcel #70-03-29-160-004). The City is replacing the 150 ft. tall rectangular communication tower with a 150 ft. tall monopole style communication tower. A telecommunications tower is permitted via special land use in the LDR district.

The City identified the telecommunication tower in need of replacement as part of the Capital Improvement Plan. Due the location and scale of the project, the City was proactive in engaging with neighboring property owners of their concerns before a formal application was submitted. Some of the concerns from those meetings were the lack of maintenance and the resulting less

than desirable appearance.

The plan calls for removing the existing chain link fence, gate, poles, footings, tower, and relocation of existing power pole. The utility building will remain. The tower will be placed further to the east on a concrete base, satisfying the minimum 75 ft. setback from the property line. The area will be screened by a 6.8 ft. tall solid fence. The site will be landscaped with stone edging. All turf disturbed during construction will be restored, and dune grass will be planted east of the tower satisfying EGLE standards.

Section 40-564 of the Zoning Ordinance provides requirements for retaining walls and outlines provisions for administrative approvals and Planning Commission approvals. Mr. Gajdos has provided responses to 40-116.03A. for special land uses.

Derek Gajdos, Project Management Director, was present and available for questions.

Chair Dora opened public meeting at 7:15 p.m.

A neighboring resident expressed concerns about the property's current condition and would like to know its long-term maintenance plan.

Motion by **Vice-Chair Galligan**, seconded by **Skelly**, to close the public hearing.

All ayes.

Public Hearing closed at 7:20 p.m.

Kozanecki, Pierce, and Smelker were good with the plan moving forward and agreed that a maintenance plan would make sense as a condition of approval.

Skelly asked about security for the property. Gajdos mentioned there would be cameras.

Owens had nothing to add.

Smolenska commented that she liked the design change.

Vice-Chair Galligan had nothing to add.

Borchers was glad to see the barbed wire fencing done.

Chair Dora had nothing to add but agreed to the maintenance plan.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Owens**, to approve Case 25-29: A special land use permit for telecommunication tower at 207 Emmet St. (parcel #70-03-29-160-004), subject to the following conditions:

1. Maintenance plan is prepared and submitted.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Pierce, Smolenska, Skelly, Galligan, Smelker, Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Dora

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Case 25-30: A rezoning application from I, Industrial to TI, Transitional Industrial for parcels located near 924 Beechtree St. (parcels #70-03-27-315-012; 315-015; and 315-013).

Urquhart introduced the case. Tom White of PolyPly, submitted a zoning change application to rezone three parcels located near 924 S. Beechtree St. (parcels #70-03-27-315-012; 315-015; 315-013) for an expansion at PolyPly Composites at 1540 Marion Ave. The vacant land can serve as a 55,000 sq. ft. expansion to the facility at 1540 Marion, with parking, access and stormwater management. The total area of land to be rezoned is 8.42 acres.

During July meeting, the PC discussed the process for the expansion. It was determined two separate tracks would be followed, first rezoning from I to TI, then site plan review for the expansion. A public hearing was scheduled for August 12th. Staff stated the parcels could remain zoned Industrial, however best practice is to maintain a singular zoning district for a singular building and accessory uses. Please note the two parcels, 70-03-27-315-014 and 70-03-27-315-016 located to the east and south, will remain Industrial and within the Sensitive Area Overlay.

Sec. 40-121.A. listed the standards for the Planning Commission to consider for rezoning requests:

1. If the proposed zoning amendment is consistent with the city's adopted master plan.

Comment:

The City just adopted the Master Plan in May 2023, and the future land use classification for this parcel is Industrial. TI is identified as a potential compatible zoning district in the Zoning Plan on page 125 of the Master Plan.

2. If the proposed zoning amendment is consistent with recent development trends in the area.

Comment: The rezoning would allow for the expansion of an existing manufacturing facility on a vacant parcel. The 3 parcels would enable enough land for proper access, parking, traffic flow, fire protection, and stormwater management. There is a residential home located at 1200 Beechtree just to the south of the site, which is a nonconforming use in the I district. The PolyPly expansion may prompt investment for a proper and confirming use with respect to adjacent uses.

3. If the zoning amendment is compatible with existing or future land uses in the vicinity of the subject site or throughout the zoning district(s) affected by the proposed amendment. Comment: The future land use map lists these properties as Industrial use. The delineation between I and TI is minimal, and rezoning to Transitional Industrial is more compatible for future industrial trends.

4. If existing or planned public infrastructure, including streets, sanitary sewers, storm water, water, sidewalks, and street lighting are capable of accommodating potential changes in land use resulting from the proposed amendment. Comment: The three parcels considered for rezoning are fully served by a major street, fire protection, sanitary sewer, street lighting, water, and emergency access.

5. If the proposed amendment is consistent with the intent and purpose of this ordinance and whether the proposed amendment would protect the health, safety, and welfare of the city.

Comment:

Rezoning the property from I to TI would not compromise the public health, safety, and welfare.

Steve S from Abonmarche was present and available to answer questions.

Dora opened a public hearing at 7:32 p.m.

No comments.

Motion by **Vice-Chair Galligan**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to close the public hearing.

All ayes.

Public Hearing closed at 7:33 p.m.

Borchers, Owens, Kozanecki, Smelker, Pierce, Skelly, Vice-Chair Galligan, and Dora had nothing to add and agreed the plan made sense.

Motion by **Skelly**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to approve Case 25-30: A rezoning application from I, Industrial to TI, Transitional Industrial for parcels located near 924 Beechtree St. (parcels #70-03-27-315-012; 315-015; and 315-013).

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Pierce, Smolenska, Skelly, Galligan, Smelker, Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Dora

Nays: None

Motion passed.

New Business:

Case 25-27: Site Plan review for a shared driveway between 327 and 329 Ferry St. (parcels #70-03-21-328-039 and #70-03-21-328-038).

Urquhart introduced the case. Josh Brugger, on behalf of property owner Salvation Army, is requesting approval for a new shared driveway between the homes at 327 and 329 N. Ferry St. (parcels #70-03-21-328-038 & -039) per Sec. 40-605.02.F of the Zoning Ordinance. Both 327 and 329 N. Ferry are two-family dwellings, a permitted use in the NMU District.

Sec. 40-605.02.F of the Zoning Ordinance states, "*Shared access drives between separate parking areas shall be provided where appropriate and reasonable, as determined by the planning commission.*" The proposal is to install a curb cut and install a 15 ft. wide concrete driveway between the homes. The drive would expand into an asphalt parking area. Currently, there are two curb cuts, with a nonconforming gravel driveway serving both homes. The driveway leads to heavily used portion of the rear yard serving as parking spaces. The parking lot will be equipped with 2 leach basins to aid in storm water management. According to the site plan, directly to the south of 327 N. Ferry, there is an existing 12 ft. with gravel drive serving as an easement. The parcel does extend 57 ft. further to the west, towards the Salvation Army facility at 310 N. Despard. This land is used for community garden purposes. There should be no negative impact on any adjoining properties. Staff believes this is a reasonable and appropriate location for a shared access drive.

Josh Brugger, 66 Slayton, was present for questions.

Borchers liked the project but asked if two separate driveways were possible. Brugger responded that they do not own the easement, and the current property owners were not interested in selling.

Owens, Smolenska, Smelker, Vice-Chair Galligan, and Chair Dora agreed to proceed with the project.

Kozanecki and Pierce were also okay with moving the project forward and stated that their main concern regarding the curb cut was addressed.

Motion by **Pierce**, seconded by **Owens**, to approve Case 25-27, Site Plan review for a shared driveway between 327 and 329 Ferry St. (parcels #70-03-21-328-039 and #70-03-21-328-038) based on the information submitted for review, subject to the following conditions:

1. The existing curb cut at 329 N. Ferry shall be removed and all property within the public right of-way shall be restored to the satisfaction of the DPW.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Pierce, Smolenska, Skelly, Galligan, Smelker, Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Dora

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Case 25-26: Site Plan review for parking lot expansion at 524 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-355-016 and 355-008).

Urquhart introduced the case. Kyle Vyncke of Lakewood Construction, on behalf of property owner St. John's Episcopal Church, submitted a site plan application for additional parking at 524 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-355-016 & 355-008). A private parking lot requires site plan review by the Planning Commissioner per Sec. 40-115.02.

The applicant states St. John's needs additional off street parking. Currently there are 27 spaces on site, and it's presumed the church uses on street spaces for parking. The greenspace near the northeast corner of the site will be paved and converted into 13 spaces, for a total of 40 parking spaces. 1 space is required for every 4 seats in a place of public assembly per Sec. 40-605.

The parking lot will be screened appropriately with canopy trees and shrubs, as shown in the landscape plan. Maintaining a landscape plan that effectively screens and enhances the site is vital for this location. The plans call for one lighting fixture to be relocated, whereas all other items will remain unchanged. All storm water management practices have been reviewed by the DPW. A review letter will be submitted to the applicant. The BLP and Fire Marshal had no issues with the site plan.

Kyle Vyncke of Lakewood Construction was present for any questions.

Commissioners had questions about what drove the need for increased parking and whether the rear of the building could be used for additional parking. The property owner was not present to answer questions.

Commissioners did not feel they had enough information to make a decision.

Motion by **Kozanecki**, seconded by **Skelly**, to postpone Case 25-26, Site Plan review for parking lot expansion at 524 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-355-016 and 355-008) to September 9, 2025, to allow for further information from the property owner concerning parking demands and also be available for additional questions from the commissioners.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Pierce, Smolenska, Skelly, Galligan, Smelker, Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Dora

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Case 25-25: Major amendment to the site plan for multiple-family dwelling at 1445 Columbus Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-477-017).

Urquhart introduced the case. Joe Westerbeke of *Eng. Engineering and Survey*, submitted an amendment to the site plan for the multiple family dwelling at 1445 Columbus Ave. (parcels #70-03-21-477-017 & #70-03-21-447-016). A multiple family dwelling is permitted by special land use in the Transitional Industrial (TI) district per Sec. 40-419.02.B. The amendment for additional parking, access drive, and dwelling units is considered a major amendment per Sec. 40-115.04

In April, the Planning Commission approved the site plan and special land use for a 4-story 37 unit multiple family dwelling with associated off street parking. Recently, Westwind Construction acquired the property at 1430 Fulton Ave., which is contiguous to the development and currently housing a single-family home. The plans call for demolition of the home, and replaced with 12 parking spaces for the development. A new curb cut would be installed along Fulton Ave. All properties are within in the Transitional Industrial District.

There are no changes to the footprint, building height, exterior cladding material, dumpster location, snow storage, and lighting. The increase of 12 parking spaces allows for additional dwelling units. The floor plan was amended to increase from 37 to 45 units, with 11 units on the top level. The first floor layout will not include any dwelling units, but will house equipment, tenant and bike storage, including the lobby and elevator. The 2nd and 3rd floors will have the same layout, with 17 units in each floor. The unit breakdown:

Efficiency	1-bedroom	2-bedroom
20	22	3

A new ground sign will be placed near the entrance off Fulton Ave. It is also expected the parking lot will be illuminated with a light pole. All landscaping, pedestrian connectivity, and screening conditions from the previous site plan approval are met.

Peter Oleszczuk, of Westwind Construction, was available for any questions.

The commissioners supported the site plan and felt it would be a good addition to the East End.

Pierce asked how traffic control would be managed. Oleszczuk responded that signage would be in place to help direct incoming and outgoing traffic.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve Case 25-25, A major amendment to the site plan for multiple-family dwelling at 1445 Columbus Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-477-017) based on the information submitted for review, subject to the following conditions:

1. All conditions of the BLP, DPW and Fire Marshal shall be met.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Pierce, Smolenska, Skelly, Galligan, Smelker, Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Dora

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Case 25-28: A Final Development Plan for Hotel PD at 233 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-20-432-017).

Urquhart introduced the case. Kevin Einfeld of BDR, on behalf of property owner 233 LLC, has submitted a site plan review for the final development plan for a 128-room hotel at 233 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-20-432-017). After receiving rezoning and preliminary development plan approval, the final development plan is the final step for review.

In May, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the PD rezoning and Preliminary Planned Development with conditions to City Council. At their June 16th meeting, City Council adopted the rezoning and PD development plan. The conditions included with comments:

1. The hotel project will comply with all applicable federal, state, county, and City laws and ordinances.
2. A departure from the building height guidance standard is approved to allow for a five-story building, provided the roof pitch contains variations as depicted in the preliminary development plan.
3. The existing right-of-way dividing the parcel shall be vacated prior to the final development plan approval. - City Council approved the final resolution of the ROW at the August 4th meeting.
4. The "Sherwood Forest" portion of the preliminary development plan shall remain open and available for public use.
5. The tree lawn along Columbus Avenue will be re-established per specifications of the City's Department of Public Works.
6. Landscaping around the perimeter of the hotel parcel should be provided wherever possible, as determined by the Planning Commission in reviewing the final development plan, to soften and screen the site. – The final development plan includes landscape planter boxes along 3rd St. to break up the continuous wall.
7. The dumpster enclosure is limited to six feet in height and may be located on the property line, as approved by the Planning Commission in reviewing the final development plan.

8. Signage plan shall be submitted with the final development plan and is subject to the approval of the Planning Commission. – The signage plan includes details for the size, illumination, and placement for wall, projecting, ground and directional signs.

9. Exterior cladding materials shall meet the standards of the Central Business District, or other cladding material that satisfies the intent of the Central Business District, as approved by the Planning Commission. The applicant has selected to go with entire brick material on the upper levels, with possible variation of color on the insets, and masonry block on the main level, aligning with the exterior cladding materials required in the CBD District.

10. The project will provide 89 on-site parking spaces. The remaining required 39 parking spaces will be finalized through recorded shared parking agreement or other parking exemptions prior to final development plan approval. The requirement for utilizing off street parking spaces shall be extended to a walking distance of within 900 feet of a hotel entrance. No on-street parking spaces shall be counted towards the required parking amount. – A memorandum of understanding has been reached with Ottawa County, for use of their parking lot located south of Franklin Ave. The parking lot contains over 60 spaces, satisfying the demand for the additional 39 spaces. The City and County have arrived at a preliminary agreement for use of the parking lot for hotel guests. The parking lot is within the 900 ft. walking distance of the hotel entrance. The agreement can be finalized following approval of the final development plan.

The plans for the Residence Inn have been reviewed by the Planning Commission, with input from the Historic Commission and City Council. Through two public hearings, the public has voiced their thoughts regarding the layout and appearance of the hotel. The applicant has executed a tremendous community engagement plan with downtown property owners, merchants, business, and organizations. Taking into account the feedback, final development plan incorporates a building design and layout that will endure the test of time, establishing itself an iconic feature of downtown Grand Haven.

Building Massing: The final plan calls for approximately 25% lot coverage, with a final building height of 66 ft. 10 in. The building height is an appropriate height for this location within the downtown, anchoring the east end.

Architectural Character: The architectural features reflect a traditional historic-inspired brick exterior on the upper stories, and masonry block on the main level. The roof contains a mixture of flat and pitched roofs, breaking up the building from street view into an appropriate downtown scale. The final rendering depicts upper stories which are slightly set back, establishing proper building articulation every 20 ft. for primary walls. The applicant did consider the idea of possible color changes to the brick, providing a break up from a singular color pattern. The Planning Commission carries the final decision on the color scheme.

Large rectangular windows off Washington Ave. and 3rd St. provide an efficient level of transparency for hotel use. The upper stories will have rectangular windows, with the uppermost presidential suite on the 5th floor include large windows, showcasing the building corner. The size, design, and placement of the windows largely comply with the transparency requirement for primary walls in the CBD district. The PD transparency for hotel use is optimized and aligns with the architectural character of the building.

Lighting: The parking lot will be illuminated by pole lighting no greater than 20 ft. in height, with 100% cut off at the horizontal plane. The main level will include wall pack lighting along 3rd and Washington, activating the street and pedestrian walkability during the night-time. The same wall pack lighting is shown on the west and north walls, illuminating the interior sidewalk.

Traffic & Access: The preliminary development plan depicts 3 access drives off Columbus Ave. Internal parking will provide a drop off and pick up area. The parking lot remains connected with the existing public alley behind the 200 block of Washington Ave.

Stormwater Runoff: Stormwater will not be impacted as the site is currently built out. Two catch basins will be placed in the parking lot with a 12" storm line. Stormwater will be directed into the 15" storm main in Columbus.

Visual Screening: As a built out site in downtown, practical application of screening for a building can be difficult to achieve. The landscape plan calls for three areas along 3rd St. with planter boxes. The planter boxed will be planted with arborvitae, or other evergreen species. The right-of-way along Columbus will include street trees and shrubs. Deciduous trees will be planted in the parking lot and within the landscape island near the drop off entrance.

Sherwood Forest: The preliminary development plan required the Sherwood Forest area to main open and available for public use. The final development plan calls for a fireplace with patio seating. Also shown is a fire pit with outdoor seating, all open to the public. The hotel provides amenities just for guests including the grill and gathering space. Careful landscaping, lighting, and pedestrian flow incorporate place making strategies for Sherwood Forest, providing a public benefit.

Signage: The final plan includes two blade signs off the south and east wall, identifying the building from street view. Three wall signs are proposed along the south, east and north walls, and a ground sign is shown within the landscape island near the drop off entrance. Directional signs near the entrances off Columbus Ave. provide efficient traffic flow for guests arriving and departing.

Dumpster enclosure: The dumpster enclosure will be 6 ft. tall with a dark stone finish to match the hotel. The gates will be comprised of metal in matching color.

Parking: The final development plan includes 89 off street parking spaces located behind the building. All parking spaces are 90-degree with 24 ft. wide maneuvering lanes. The City and Ottawa County have reached a memorandum of understanding to utilize the parking lot off Franklin. The demand for parking has been met for the additional 39 spaces needed for the hotel guests.

Skelly recused himself from this case.

Tom Welling from 6 pm Hospitality appreciated the collaboration and input from various departments within the City. He was also available for any questions. Kevin Einfield from BDR was also present.

Borchers was excited about the brick exterior. He also had questions about who would maintain Sherwood Forest and potentially reduce signage.

Owens shared the same sentiments regarding the signage and wondered how the general public would know Sherwood Forest was for the public and not limited to hotel guests. Enfield responded that the only area that would be sectioned off for guests would be the grill area. He stated they would work with a landscaping artist to be sure the area is open and welcoming.

Smolenska wondered if all the signs were illuminated. Peter Buchama from 6 p.m. hospitality stated that they would be on a timer and dimmed down at night.

Kozanecki was also concerned about the amount of signage. Welling mentioned that part of the signage was part of the brand standards; however, they were willing to go back to the brand to ask about a compromise. Kozanecki stated she would also like to see the parking a little closer to the building. Welling mentioned there was something in the works with neighboring businesses.

Pierce also appreciated the work everyone has put into this project. He mentioned that he was okay with the signs because they are dimmable and will be on a timer.

Smelker also thanked 6pm for listening to the commissioners. In regards to signage, Smelker sighted Ordinance 40-7-01, and stated the blade signs are allowable but only 12 square feet, and felt that 21 feet was in excess. She encouraged 6 pm to return to the brand to discuss the variances according to our Ordinance. Smelker also inquired about how many outdoor fire pits there would be. Welling mentioned there would be 1 in the common area of Sherwood Forest and a fire pit near the grill area.

Vice-Chair Galligan stated he agreed with Pierce and did not find the signage offensive as long as they are not bright.

Chair Dora stated he felt changing the brick colors in areas would be a significant change to break things up, instead of a wall of red brick. He also mentioned he appreciated the access to Sherwood Forest. He also echoed concern for the signage and to return to the brand to ask for a happy medium.

Welling asked if, once he met with the brand to find a solution, it could be brought to staff review. Commissioners were okay with this option.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Owens**, to approve Case 25-28, A Final Development Plan for Hotel PD at 233 Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-20-432-017), based on the information submitted for review, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. An encroachment permit will be necessary for all sign, canopy and other encroachments into the public right-of-way.*
- 2. The Sherwood Forest portion of the site will maintain a fire pit, seating area, gathering space, and be open to the public.*
- 3. All conditions of the BLP, DPW and Fire Marshal shall be met.*
- 4. All conditions from the Preliminary Development Plan shall remain*
- 5. Signage will be handled administratively.*

Roll Call Vote.

Yays: Pierce, Smolenska, Galligan, Smelker, Borchers, Kozanecki, Owens, Dora

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Old Business: None

Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Report:

Kozanecki reported that a meeting was not held in July and will also not be held in August.

City Planner Report:

Urquhart thanked the commissioners for their collaboration and felt it was a great example of working together with various departments to accomplish things.

Dylan Bray was introduced, who has been working to help take on various administrative tasks, which allowed Urquhart to invest more time into RFPs and the Centertown Vision Plan.

Urquhart mentioned various fraudulent invoices coming from the city; however, he noted to look for the city logo, and the city does not ask for ACH or wire transfer payments.

Urquhart also noted there will be a few items on the next agenda.

Call to the Audience: Second Opportunity:

Josh Brugger, 66, Slayton, thanked the commissioners for approving the projects at the Salvation Army and Columbus and explained that their vote was helping to impact the housing issues Ottawa County faces.

Joyce Workman, 7 N. 7th, thanked Brian for his work helping to bridge the gap between the DDA and the Planning Commission.

Steve Mag, 22 S. Harbor stated he did not favor the hotel development.

Jim Hagen, 400 Lake, stated he felt it was time to look at updating the City's Master Plan.

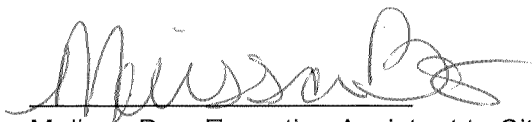
Peter Wilson, 322 Washington, spoke about short-term rentals and the Centertown Overlay.

Tim Hemphill, 11 S First St, stated he did not favor the hotel development.

Adjournment:

Motion by **Pierce**, seconded by **Kozanecki**, to adjourn.

Chair Dora adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.



Handwritten signature of Melissa Bos in cursive script.

Melissa Bos, Executive Assistant to City Manager