APPROVED
OCT 13 2026
CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
PLANNING COMMISSION

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GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 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, Joe Filippelli, Bill Ellingboe, Secretary Magda Smolenska

Absent: Vice-Chair Jennifer Smelker,

Also Present: City Planner Brian Urquhart, Mayor Bob Monetza, Mayor Pro-Tem Mike Dora, City Manager Ashley Latsch, and members of the public.

Approval of Minutes
Motion by **Kozanecki** seconded by **Smolenska** to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2026, meeting.
All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Approval of Agenda
Motion by **Kozanecki**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to approve the agenda.
All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Call to the Audience: First Opportunity

Jeff Miller, 1120 S Harbor, spoke regarding the short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave being brought back before the Planning Commission three months later with no notice.

Julie Busta, 8 Edwards Ave, spoke regarding the short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave. and no notice.

Lynn Phipps, 11 Edwards Ave, spoke regarding the short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave and her displeasure with more short-term rentals.

Brian Ruster, 9 Peterson Ridge, spoke regarding the short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave and it not being re-noticed when it came back before the Planning Commission.

Catherine Ruster, 9 Peterson Ridge, wrote a letter read by her husband, Brian Ruster, regarding the short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave.

Public Hearings

None.

New Business

A. Case 26-29: Site Plan review for new driveway and site improvements at 700 Robbins Rd. (parcel #70-03-33-100-090)

Urquhart presented the case. Bruce Callen of Callen Engineering, on behalf of property owner Coastline Holdings LLC, submitted a site plan application for a new access drive and site improvements at 700 Robbins Rd. (parcel #70-03-33-100- 090). As an established use, a site plan review is required by the planning commission with the addition of a new public access drive per Sec. 40-115.09.B.

No changes will be made to the building. The primary improvement is the installation of 24 ft. wide access drive off Robbins along the eastern portion of the parcel. The access drive will extend into the parking lot located behind the building. No changes to parking will be proposed. The use will satisfy the parking demand. The driveway will allow for access in front of the building and extend around to the rear parking lot. The fire marshal has agreed to this design for access. Directly south and east is the South Village project. There is no connection nor internal access from 700 Robbins to South Village PD. The connection will be removed through screening and fencing at the South Village site.

Bruce Callen of Callen Engineering spoke regarding this request. He stated they are losing a shared access drive and that is why this second entrance is necessary.

Filippelli asked for clarification on the number of parking spots and the size of the opening, wanting it on record that it in non-conforming.

No other discussion occurred between commissioners.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Borchers** to approve case 26-29, a site plan review for new driveway at 700 Robbins Rd. (parcel #70-03- 33-100-090) with the following conditions:

1. Site plan shall be amended to include a sidewalk shown along the entire length of the north property line.
2. All conditions of the BLP, DPW and Fire Marshal shall be met.

Roll Call Vote.
Yays: Filippelli, Ellingboe, Smolenska, Blakeney, Borchers, Kozanecki, Pierce
Nays: None
Motion passed.

B. Case 26-30: Pre-application for a mixed-use development at 601 S. Beechtree St. (parcel #70- 03-28-277-017)

Urquhart presented the case. Denny Dryer of Dryer Architects, on behalf of property owner Steve Musial, submitted a site plan application for a mixed-use development located in the western portion of the lot at 601 S. Beechtree. Mr. Dryer is proposing a mixed-use development, composed of 9 separate units on two structures on the current unused parking lot behind Clover Bar. The mixed-use development is similar to the uses located at 815 Verhoeks and 1500 Kooiman.

The most important factor for the mixed-use development is access. The plan to include a driveway within the right-of-way would rest with City Council upon recommendation from the respective city departments. The plan does call for a 22 ft. wide drive just east of the development, providing access off Waverly Rd. Per Sec. 40-306.01, the parcel will also need to

be split, as no more than 1 principal use per lot is permitted. Clover Bar is planned to remain, and thus a different principal use on the same lot.

Denny Dyer of Dryer Architects spoke regarding the need for a private drive in order to continue building.

Commissioners discussed screening, elevation/design standards, and the feasibility of the project going forward if the private drive does not get approved by City Council.

C. Case 26-31: Pre-public hearing for a special land use for an event center and site plan review for residential above retail at 224 Washington Ave. formerly known as the Grand Haven Jewelry Building (parcel #70-03-20-436-011)

Urquhart presented the case. Denny Dryer of Dryer Architects, on behalf of business owner Nick Ford, submitted conceptual plans and sketches for the redevelopment of 224 Washington Ave. (referred to as the former Jewelry Building). The plan is to renovate the structure and incorporate retail, event and residential uses. According to building records, the building was constructed in the 1880s. In 2020, the Planning Commission approved a site plan to allow for retail/office on the main level with 7 residential units on the upper level. This site plan has since expired as the building has continued to be vacant.

The plan calls for large retail space in front of the main level, and private offices in the rear. The second floor will include a private residence. The roof top will be converted into an active event space with enclosed kitchen prep space, restrooms, storage area, elevator shaft and stairway. The basement would be converted into a private garage with 3 spaces for strictly residential use. The main level use will also be included as part of the event space, which will occur during non-retail hours.

Denny Dryer of Dryer Architects spoke, in detail, about the proposed site plan. Emphasizing that there will be no balconies, that the building will be renovated and not torn down, and that the

Nick Ford, business owner, went into detail regarding his business and his plans for the space.

Commissioners discussed the roof and first floor event space use and occupancy.

D. Zoning Text Amendment: Towing & Recovery Facility

Urquhart presented. At the June 17 ZBA meeting, the ZBA made a motion to approve an appeal to the nonconforming use of an automobile and towing and recovery facility at 321 N. 7th St. Based on the requirement from the ZBA, staff compiled a list of possible zoning districts in which an automobile towing and recovery facility would be located.

In researching definitions, staff made a recommendation to amend Sec. 40.201.01.

Commissioners discussed fencing/residential buffers, a storage time limit, and clarification on next steps. Commissioners agreed on 30 days for the time limit.

Old Business

None.

Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Report

Kozanecki stated the ZBA had a meeting in August 2026 where they heard a case with a two part request. One part was accepted and the other part was denied. They have a meeting tomorrow on September 16, 2026, which is just procedural, no cases are scheduled to be heard.

City Planner Report

Urquhart began giving an update regarding the Case 26-16.

Motion by **Kozanecki**, seconded by **Smolenska** to adjourn temporarily. All ayes. **Motion passes.** Meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Chair Pierce brought the meeting back to order at 8:17 p.m.

Urquhart continued giving an update regarding Case 26-16, which was a request for a short-term rental at 26 Edwards Ave. Urquhart briefly explained what happened with the case and what happened when the issue was brought up at the City Council meeting. All legal requirements were met.

Urquhart explained that anyone who wanted to appeal the decision has 21 days following the approval of the August 2026 meeting minutes to file an appeal with the circuit court per Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

Commissioner Comments

Urquhart stated commissioner comments were now included in the agenda going forward. Commissioners can provided comments on any matter.

Borchers asked Urquhart about when the master plan would come back.

Kozanecki asked to clarify the tie vote in PC Case 26-16 meant that the motion did not pass. She also brought up the need for commissioners to revisit discussions regarding short-term rentals sooner rather than later.

Pierce spoke about setting expectations on reviewing cases in the future.

Call to the Audience: Second Opportunity

Julie Busta, 8 Edwards Ave, asked for clarification on what 'motion does not pass' means and spoke regarding her wishes that the public was part of the process.

Mayor Bob Monetza, 945 Washington Ave, re-assured commissioners that they did follow the correct process but asked that they consider a potential change in the by-laws to go beyond what the law requires in order to do what is best for the people.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mike Dora, 501 Friant St, welcomed new commissioners and spoke regarding changes proposed after discussions.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by **Chair Pierce** at 8:39 p.m.

Amy Vos, Deputy City Clerk