

**CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 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, 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 **Smolenska**, to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2026, meeting.

All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Approval of Agenda

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

All ayes. **Motion passes.**

Call to the Audience: First Opportunity

No one spoke.

Public Hearings

A. Case 26-26: Special land use, site plan review, and sensitive area overlay for an eating and drinking establishment, and retail/office building for the Chinook Pier development located near 301 N. Harbor Dr. (parcel #70-03-20-280-025).

Smolenska recused herself for the next two cases.

Urquhart presented the case. Callen Engineering and Architektura, on behalf of applicant Copper Rock Construction, submitted a site plan, special land use and sensitive area overlay application for the development of Chinook Pier at 301 N. Harbor Dr. (parcel #70-03-20-280-025). This request shall serve as the primary local approval of the site layout and proposed uses for Chinook Pier, contingent upon any requirements within the lease agreement and/or development agreement.

Small changes were made to the preliminary plan that we saw at the July meeting. Most notably the farmers market is now inside of the multipurpose building. The site plan also includes details on lighting, connectivity for non-motorized pedestrians, signage, dumpster enclosures, and the miniature golf course.

No correspondence has been received at this time.

Greg Taylor from Copper Rock went into detail explaining the current site plan to commissioners and he highlighted all the changes that were made to the site plan since the July 2026 meeting.

Chair Pierce opened the public hearing at 7:14 p.m.

No one spoke.

Motion by **Blakeney**, seconded by **Borchers**, to close the public hearing.

All ayes. Public Hearing closed at 7:15 p.m.

Discussion between commissioners included cohesiveness of lighting, landscaping, open green spaces, food trucks, the future of the sailing building, and the future of the mini golf course.

City Manager, Ashley Latsch, responded to commissioner's questions regarding communication of the project to residents and/or the DDA. She stated that engagement happened during the RFP process.

Mayor, Bob Monetza, responded to the commissioner's concerns stating that he sits on the MSDDA board and they have discussed Chinook Pier at length and are excited. He also stated that this is filling a vacancy left from the old building.

Assistant City Manager, Dana Kollwehr, answered questions regarding the sailing club and the Farmers Market.

Motion by **Smelker**, seconded by **Blakeney**, to approve case 26-26, special land use, site plan review, and sensitive area overlay for an eating and drinking establishment, and retail/office building for the Chinook Pier development located near 301 N. Harbor Dr. (parcel #70-03-20-280-025) with the information as submitted along with the following conditions:

1. Final exterior cladding materials, color, design and lighting for the buildings shall be approved by the Planning Commission during a subsequent meeting, but approval shall be prior to any demolition and/or grading occurring on site.
2. Mini-golf location shall be finalized, which can be approved administratively.
3. Specific details of the dumpster enclosure material be submitted to City staff for review/approval.
4. A photometric lighting plan be submitted and approved administratively.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Kozanecki, Filipelli, Blakeney, Smelker, Pierce

Nays: Borchers

Abstain: Smolenska

Motion passed 5-1.

New Business

A. Case 26-25: 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 site, conceptual, and elevation plans for the proposed residential above retail development at 211-213 Washington Ave. (parcels #70-0320-432-011 & 70-03-20-432-012). 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 with 2 tenant retail spaces, and 5 residential condo units on the 2nd and 3rd stories.

The plans also include an enclosed garage with lifts, common rooftop deck, and deck patios overlooking Washington Ave. The proposed building will take advantage of the 0 ft. building setbacks. The building height for the parapet wall is 40 feet, and to the top of the elevator is 52 ft., staying within the maximum building height of 52 ft. in the Central Business District. Each unit will have its own outdoor space and access to the roof top deck. Residential above retail/office in the Central Business district is permitted by right. The exterior cladding materials and transparency requirements for primary walls in the ground and upper levels appear to be met.

Keegan Balk, owner, shared how his family ended up owning the buildings and why they chose to tear them down and rebuild them into one building.

Kirsten Runchske, from Architektura, showed the outside design material and color chosen. She also went through the changes that were made after hearing the suggestions from Planning Commissioners at a past meeting.

Discussion from commissioners included questions regarding why they chose to set back the roof on the top level instead of finishing it, reservations around the balconies, and the choice of siding.

Motion by **Kozanecki**, seconded by **Blakeney**, to approve case 26- 25, a site plan review for 5-dwelling unit addition for the residential above retail space at 211-213 Washington Ave. (parcels #70-03-20-432-011 & #70-03-20-432-012) based on the information submitted with the following conditions:

1. Encroachment permits for the balconies shall be necessary.
2. All conditions of the BLP, DPW, and Fire Marshal shall be met.

Roll Call Vote.

Yeas: Borchers, Blakeney, Filipelli, Kozanecki, Smelker, Pierce

Nays:

Abstain: Smolenska

Motion passed 6-0.

B. Case 26-27: An application for Final Development Plan for a mixed-use development at 1500 Kooiman Street (parcel #70-03-28-301-019)

Urquhart presented the case. The preliminary development plan and zoning change request for 1500 Kooiman from TI, Transitional Industrial to PD, Planned Development was approved by the Planning Commission in 2025 and then adopted by City Council in February 2026.

The next step is a final development plan review and approval by the Planning Commission to fulfill the request. There are no changes from the preliminary development to the final development plan. The applicant satisfied the conditions of approval for the preliminary development plan.

Chair Pierce took a moment to fill in new commissioners on this case.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve case 26-27 the final development plan for mixed-use development located at 1500 Kooiman St. (parcel #70-03-28-301-019), based on the information submitted for review.

Roll Call Vote.

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

Nays:

Motion passed.

C. Centertown Vision Plan

Urquhart explained to Commissioners what was needed regarding this case. The Centertown Vision plan was presented and discussions were held during the work session.

Motion by **Kozanecki**, seconded by **Smelker**, to send the draft Centertown Vision Plan to City Council for their approval and to schedule a public hearing for October 13, 2026, for the approval of the distribution of the plan.

Roll Call Vote.

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

Nays:

Motion passed.

Old Business

A. Case 26-16: Special land use request for a short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave. (parcel #70-03-29-156-033)

Urquhart presented the case. Applicant Patrick and Emily Kurtz applied for a Special Land Use Permit for Short-Term Rental located at 26 Edward Ave. (parcel #70-03-29-156-033). The Dune Residential District allows short-term rentals as a special land use.

At the May meeting, the Planning Commission made a motion to approve the special land use for a short-term rental at 26 Edward Ave. The motion ended in a tie vote. Staff consulted with the City Attorney who verified the case is still before the Planning Commission, as the special land use was neither approved nor denied. The applicant was made aware of the attorney's determination and elected to come before the Planning Commission again and is willing to offer a condition to limit the occupancy and total parking spaces required.

No changes to the site plan or use are proposed, therefore another public hearing is not required. Two letters were received from the public regarding this case.

Katie Johnson, applicant's attorney, stated owners have added signs to announce it's parallel parking only. She also explained that the parking spaces are deeded to the applicants and they can park there regardless of approval. The family will be in the home most of the time and are willing to go down to a nine-person capacity to limit the amount of parking spaces needed.

Emily Kurtz, 26 Edward, explained original parking and went through all of the changes they made to assist with parking issues.

No discussion from commissioners ensued.

Motion by **Blakeney**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to approve case 26-16, a request for a Special Use Permit for a short-term rental located at 26 Edward Ave. (parcel #70-03-29-156-033) based on the information submitted for review with the following condition:

1. Parking shall not exceed three (3) spaces and limitation of occupancy to 9 people.

Roll Call Vote.

Yaes: Smelker, Blakeney, Smolenska, Filippelli, Borchers, Kozanecki, Pierce

Nays:

Motion passed.

Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Report

Kozanecki stated there was a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting in July 2026. They approved a lot split case at 1200 Washington Ave and denied Dick's Towing over transparency. The next Zoning Board of Appeals meeting will be on August 19, 2026.

City Planner Report

Urquhart gave updates regarding a towing and recovery definition, open air SLU permits, the Grand Landing project, brought up training opportunities for new members, and reminded commissioners that next month's meeting is moved to the 15th because of Labor Day. He also thanked commissioners for their comments on Chinook Pier and clarified issues discussed during the work session.

Call to the Audience: Second Opportunity

Mayor Bob Monetza, 945 Washington Ave, thanked commissioners for taking the next steps and recommending the Chinook Pier plans to City Council. He agrees with commissioners that the plans are not complete and require revisions before final approval.

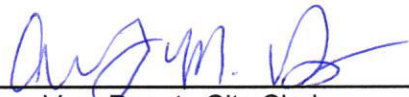
Borchers expressed concerns regarding Chinook Pier. He also stated the need to address requirements calling out balcony requirements downtown specifically.

Chair Joe Pierce made a comment expressing his surprise at the lack of public input regarding Chinook Pier and wants to make sure that the public is aware of Chinook Pier.

Kirsten Runchske, from Architektura, thanked commissioners for their input and made a comment regarding balconies.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by **Chair Pierce** at 9:12 p.m.



Amy Vos, Deputy City Clerk