



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

- I. *The City of Buchanan Planning Commission, in compliance with Michigan's Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a Planning Commission meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.*
- II. ** Comments may also be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the Zoning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen at kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com*
- * Buchanan City will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aide and services to those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the public meeting upon receiving at least one (1) week's prior notice. Any such individual requiring such aids or services should contact the city in writing or by telephoning: Buchanan City Clerk; 302 North Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3844.*
- III. Regular Meeting - Call to Order**
- Meeting called to order at 6:01pm.
- IV. Pledge of Allegiance**
- Houser led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- V. Roll Call**
- Present: Vigansky, Houser, Brown, Pleasant, Lysy, Garry
- Absent: Wregglesworth
- City Staff Present: City Clerk Kalla Langston-Weiss, Planning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen
- VI. Approve Agenda**
- Pleasant moved, seconded by Brown to approve Agenda as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.
- VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items**
- Dennis Mori – Mori apologized for his behavior at the previous meeting and thanked the Board for approving the sign text changes.
- VIII. Approve Minutes**
- A. Consider the Public Hearing & Regular Meeting Minutes from July 14th, 2026.
- Brown identified a typo and Garry had a question about the public comment section.
- Brown moved, seconded by Lysy to approve the July 14th, 2026 Minutes as amended. Voice vote carried unanimously.
- IX. Old Business**
- A. Review and Discuss Master Plan Draft Objectives, Goals and Actions
- Gundersen presented her draft Master Plan Objectives, Goals and Actions. Lysy suggested adding language and resources for residents about aging in place and Vigansky asked about broadband. Free wifi in the downtown was discussed as a potential long term goal. Lysy suggested encouraging the creation of more National Register Historic Districts and continued support for Dial-a-ride. There was discussion of payment in lieu of parking, consolidation of public safety assets, and marketing.
- B. Review and Discuss Unified Development Code - Signs draft language

There will be a public hearing next month. Staff recommends a minimum clearance for signs over sidewalks of 6'8" and does not recommend allowing open flags be allowed below that. There was discussion on different Open flags in different communities and what clearance is best. Gundersen refined the code to allow for either a sandwich board or an open flag in the public right of way.

Pleasant moved, seconded by Brown for Table 71-T District Regulations to be updated with a minimum clearance for wall mounted signs be decreased from 8' to 6'8" when located over public or private sidewalk and continued use of 15' when located over public or private streets/alleys or drive-aisles.

Yes: Brown, Pleasant, Lysy, Garry, Vigansky

No: Houser

Houser thought this motion was to lower the minimum clearance below 6'8".

Vigansky moved, seconded by Lysy to void the previous motion. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Pleasant moved, seconded by Brown to decrease the minimum clearance of a projecting sign from 8' to 6'8" when located above a sidewalk. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Brown moved, seconded by Pleasant to recommend that where in the draft sign ordinance regulations it references 1 and 2 family be changed to 1 and 4 family to comply with regulations established in table 71-T. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Houser moved, seconded by Vigansky to support the draft language found on page 22 of the August 11, 2026 Planning Commission packet which allows temporary signage in the D (Downtown) District either as sandwich boards or open flag sign as presented.

Lysy noted that the open flag sign could be lower and meet ADA standards if there was a barrier beneath it. Brown asked Mori if the open flags were meant more for pedestrians or drivers, Mori answered they were meant for walkers and reiterated that signs with a lower clearance could be ADA compliant if a barrier was below them. A lower clearance allows for a more visible sign and is easier for business owners to put up and take down. Houser thinks lower signs are a visibility issue.

Yes: Vigansky, Houser, Brown, Pleasant, Garry

No: Lysy

Motion carried.

C. Review Recommendations from Design Review Committee Associated with Unified Development Code

Gundersen presented the recommended changes to the Unified Development Code from the Design Review Committee as pertains to their committee. Houser asked if there could be a process where a neighbor or other community member can appeal a decision. Gundersen suggested sending out notices to adjacent property owners of upcoming DRC meetings. Lysy asked that Veteran's Memorial Park be added to the map as the DRC should review facades there should structures be added. Houser stated that the Planning Commission should review decisions made by the DRC when they deviate from the Design Standards.

D. Review Final Draft Fencing, Screening, Lighting and Landscaping Amendments to Unified Development Code

Gundersen presented her draft amendments, including clarity on chain link fencing and permitted tree species as recommended by the Buchanan Tree Friends.

X. New Business

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

XII. Zoning & Community Development Director Comments

Gundersen is finishing up this round of changes to the Unified Development Code and expects September and October to be quieter due to staff being away at conferences and City Hall updates to computer software.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Vigansky – None.

Pleasant – Grateful the Board is making progress.

Brown – The discussion they are having is important. It is important to have a dialogue with the community.

Lysy – None.

Garry – Appreciates having a deep discussion. Thanked Langston-Weiss and Gundersen for their hard work.

Houser – Resigned from the Planning Commission Board.

XIV. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Mayor Mark Weedon