



**THE CITY OF THE VILLAGE OF DOUGLAS
PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 AT 6:00 PM
415 WEST WILEY RD, SUITE 103, DOUGLAS, MI
49406**

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Balmer called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Present

Chair Matt Balmer
Commissioner Paul Buszka
Commissioner Patty Hanson
Commissioner Tom Hickey
Commissioner Jennifer Ludwick
Commissioner Steven Merouse
Commissioner John O'Malley
Commissioner Laura Peterson

Also Present

Planning & Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen

Not Present

Commissioner Neal Seabert

A. Approval of Agenda - March 12, 2026 (additions/changes/deletions)

Motion by Hickey, seconded by Merouse to approve the March 12, 2026, agenda.

B. Approval of Minutes - February 12, 2026 (additions/changes/deletions)

Motion by Hickey, seconded by Merouse, to amend the February 12, 2026, meeting minutes to reflect that access to the development shall be from Center Street, with McVea Street limited to emergency access only, as stated during public comment by Charity Nosse. - Motion carried unanimously.

3. **PUBLIC COMMUNICATION - VERBAL (LIMIT OF 3 MINUTES)** - None

4. **PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – WRITTEN** - None

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. 13 S. Union St - Site Plan Review

a. Planning and Zoning Administrators Report – Planning & Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen informed the Commissioners that the applicant has made revisions based on the Commissioners' input and is now before the Commission to present those changes.

b. Applicant Presentation – Dan Boggs, on behalf of AMK Properties, presented the revised proposal to the Commissioners. He explained that the original proposal included either two to four commercial spaces and three residential units, with the modification intended to eliminate the need for an elevator.

He addressed concerns from the previous meeting, including fencing, which has been revised from vinyl to wood, and the dumpster enclosure, which will be limited to service during business hours to reduce noise. Lighting was addressed through a photometric plan demonstrating that light will not spill beyond the site.

Water and sewer capacity were reviewed, with no concerns identified. An update was also provided on landscaping, including trees proposed for removal as shown on the plan set. The patio will not be used for a dining establishment but will instead be available for first-floor tenants, who may also display merchandise in that area.

Regarding project timing, construction is anticipated to take approximately one year from the date of approval. Mr. Boggs stated that approvals have been received from KLSWA and ACDC, and that engineering-related issues have been addressed. He concluded that all concerns raised by the Commissioners have been addressed.

c. Public Comments – Randy Walker, representing the DDA, expressed support for the project and noted that she is looking forward to seeing it move forward. She informed the applicant that the DDA is developing a community survey to identify desired and needed businesses in the downtown area. She also inquired whether the applicant would be interested in working with the DDA, based on survey feedback, to help attract businesses to the space.

d. Commissioner Questions – Commissioners discussed several items related to the proposal. Hickey asked whether the concerns of neighboring properties had been addressed. The Planning & Zoning Administrator responded that a neighboring property owner was present via Zoom, and feedback would depend on their response. Commissioner Hickey also inquired about routine business deliveries and whether they could create impacts, particularly for the residential units. Boggs responded that deliveries would not affect parking.

Commissioner Buszka raised questions regarding the ordinance standards for transparency and noted that insufficient information had been provided, offering his interpretation of the requirement. A question from Commissioner Seabert, relayed by Commissioner Buszka, asked whether an additional tree could be planted. Commissioner Balmer responded that this issue would need to be addressed as part of a future ordinance rewrite, noting that requiring street trees in the C-1 District is often not feasible due to buildings being constructed lot line to lot line.

Commissioner O'Malley requested clarification on whether an elevator was required; the applicant confirmed that it was not. Commissioner Peterson asked whether the patio would be open to the public. Jack Brown of AMK responded that public access would be available through the business

occupying the space, and that use of the patio would ultimately be determined by the tenant, including whether it would be open during events such as parades.

Commissioner Peterson also raised concerns regarding deer impacts on landscaping and asked whether the applicant would consider plant selections less susceptible to damage. She further inquired about the potential for designated Post Office parking during the summer months. The Planning & Zoning Administrator responded that this could be discussed internally with staff. Commissioner Peterson also expressed concerns regarding vehicle staging during peak summer conditions. Brown responded that the applicant is continuing to evaluate options to mitigate traffic impacts during construction.

Commissioner Peterson asked how the property would be addressed given its frontage on Center Street. The Planning & Zoning Administrator responded that addressing would be determined by the Assessor. Commissioner Hanson questioned the requirement to pave the parking lot and expressed concern regarding stormwater runoff. The Planning & Zoning Administrator stated that paving was required by the City Engineer and that a private storm drainage system, approved by the Allegan County Drain Commission, is proposed to manage stormwater.

Commissioner Hanson also questioned the required number of parking spaces (17), to which Chair Balmer responded that the ordinance allows a 50 percent reduction. Hanson further expressed concern about the potential for the residential units to be used as short-term rentals. The Planning & Zoning Administrator clarified that any such use would require Special Land Use approval from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Merouse agreed that street tree requirements should be reviewed as part of a future ordinance update. Commissioner O'Malley raised concerns about existing school traffic along Union Street. Boggs requested clarification regarding the transparency requirement. Chair Balmer noted that this topic had previously been discussed with the Planning & Zoning Administrator and Tricia Anderson of Williams & Works. The Planning & Zoning Administrator explained that the requirement relates to visibility through windows, including limitations on tinting.

Commissioners generally agreed that the ordinance standards for transparency are unclear and should be reevaluated as part of the zoning ordinance update process.

Motion by Hickey, seconded by Merouse, to approve the request made by Daniel Boggs of Daniel Boggs Architect on behalf of AMK Properties for site plan approval under Article 24 of the City of the Village of Douglas Zoning Ordinance, based on the findings outlined in the staff report dated March 4, 2026, and the site plan prepared by Daniel Boggs Architect as last revised, on the parcel identified as P.P. 59-150-001-00, located at 13 S Union St.,

1. The applicant shall provide and maintain protective fencing or barriers at the drip line of all existing plant material labeled "To Remain" on the approved site plan during construction. No vehicles, construction equipment, or materials shall be parked or stored within the drip line of any plant material intended to remain. Alternative protective measures may be used only upon approval by the City.
2. The applicant shall ensure that all landscaping and vegetation are installed and maintained so that they do not obstruct the clear vision area at the intersection of Union Street and Center Street in accordance with Section 16.31 of the Zoning Ordinance.

3. The applicant shall obtain a building permit and any other required permits from Michigan Township Services.
4. The applicant shall obtain all other federal, state, and local permits if required.
5. The applicant shall ensure that the building will comply with article 10 (d) transparency standards according to the advice provided by the Planning & Zoning Administrator and Professional Planning Advisor retained by the City.
6. The developer and various workers that they have, traits that they have, that the developer communicate with the city if, for example a lane in the street needs to be closed or cement trucks in front of lot so that City can send out emails or texts to people that live in the City that the communication is really good during this year of building and development.

An amendment to the motion was provided and agreed upon to include additional conditions 5 and 6.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

7. REPORTS

- A. Planning and Zoning Administrator Report – The Planning & Zoning Administrator informed the Commissioners that he is still awaiting a response from BDR regarding the next phase of the Westshore Development.
- B. Planning Commissioner Remarks (limit 3 minutes each, please) – Commissioner Peterson thanked Planning & Zoning Administrator Homyen for the report, noting it was helpful in identifying the changes made from the original proposal. She inquired about recent activity at the Swingbridge site and asked whether the pool and drive required review by the judge as potential major changes. The Planning & Zoning Administrator responded that those elements were part of the original approval, and that only the interior boardwalk amendment required judicial review.

Commissioner Hanson asked whether the Commissioners would be open to holding a workshop to discuss short-term rentals. Chair Balmer noted that short-term rentals will require a more in-depth discussion and that scheduling would need to be coordinated. The Commissioners agreed to hold the workshop at an upcoming meeting, to be placed at the end of the agenda if other business is scheduled.

Commissioner Hanson also asked whether the subcommittee would be bringing forward previously reviewed ordinance articles to the Commissioners. The Planning & Zoning Administrator responded that further discussion with Tricia Anderson of Williams & Works would be needed to determine timing for bringing those items forward.

8. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – VERBAL (LIMIT OF 3 MINUTES) - None

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Meroose, seconded by Buszka to adjourn the meeting.