



**THE CITY OF THE VILLAGE OF DOUGLAS
PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 2025 AT 6:00 PM
86 W CENTER ST., DOUGLAS MI**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER: By Chair Balmer at 6:00pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chair Matt Balmer

Vice Chair Patty Hanson

Commissioner John O'Malley

Commissioner Laura Peterson

Commissioner Jennifer Ludwick

Commissioner Thomas Hickey

Commissioner Neal Seabert

Commissioner Steven Merouse

Commissioner Paul Buszka

Also Present

Planning and Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen

A. Approval of Agenda - August 14, 2025 (additions/changes/deletions)

Motion to approve the August 14, 2025 agenda

Motion by Hickey, seconded by O'Malley to modify the agenda of August 14th, switching items A and B in their order in respect of the environmental team to be able to give their report. – Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

B. Approval of Minutes - May 8, 2025 (additions/changes/deletions)

Motion to approve the May 8, 2025 regular meeting minutes

Motion by Seabert, seconded by Hickey to approve the May 8th, 2025 regular meeting minutes. – Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

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

4. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – WRITTEN - None

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. 453 W Center St - Site Plan Review

a. Applicant Presentation – Andrea provided a short summary of her request.

b. Planning and Zoning Administrators Report – Planning & Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen summarized the request and reviewed the applicant's history as outlined in the staff memo.

c. Public Comments – None

d. Commissioner Questions – The Commissioners shared their concerns regarding the request, focusing in particular on pedestrian access to the storefront given the busy nature of the street. Clarification was provided regarding the existing fencing: it is located on the neighboring property and therefore cannot be utilized. One suggestion was to install landscaping in that area to provide a buffer from the adjacent residential lot.

Commissioner Buszka had concerns about the safety and walkable access to the storefront business. Chair Balmer reminded the Commissioners that they do not have the authority to require sidewalks, as that decision rests with City Council. However, the Planning Commission may make a recommendation to Council for sidewalk installation. Commissioner Peterson asked the applicant about ADA access to the window. The applicant responded that Woosah, and Root Beer Barrel has windows similar or higher.

Planning & Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen relayed comments from the City Engineer, noting issues with the proposed sidewalk connection between Woosah and Root Beer Berry, as well as the need for ADA compliance. The Commission also discussed whether reducing a nonconforming use to a conforming use would require a ZBA interpretation.

City Manager Nocerini added that funding for the crosswalk is not currently available and would need to be considered in the next fiscal year. The input provided, allowed for the Planning Commission to determine not to make a recommendation to City Council for the requirement of sidewalks. Commissioners went around the table with the interpretation of the non-conforming use and it is determined that reducing the non-conforming use to a conforming use would be acceptable and has nothing to do with the residential use. Commissioner Hanson did believe that this interpretation should go to the ZBA.

Motion by Buzska, seconded by Seabert to table the request made by Andrea Johnson-Wardynski for site plan approval under Article 24 of the City of the Village of Douglas Zoning Ordinance, on the parcel identified as P.P. 59-350-001-00, located at 453 Center St., with the recommendation to add additional detail regarding the pathway to the service window and any pathways extending between the sidewalk and the corner of Center and Ferry St, and add appropriate detail about vegetative screening.

Motion Carried by unanimous voice vote.

Additional discussion: The Planning Commission decided that that they would like the details of the walkway and landscaping brought back to the Planning Commission.

B. Public Hearing - 312 Ferry St (Consumers Credit Union) - Special Land Use Request for Drive-in/Drive-through (Section 26.12) -

- Motion to Open the Public Hearing (Roll Call Vote)

Motion by Seabert, seconded by Hickey to open the public hearing. – Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

a. Applicant Presentation – Nick Loeks (Bosch Architecture) provided an update from the additional review from the Drain Commission and Fire Department that they are currently in the process of resolving the concerns that they have.

b. Planning and Zoning Administrators Report – Planning & Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen noted concerns regarding missing information in the site plan and provided details on contaminated site procedures followed by Michigan Township Services. Chair Balmer added that such matters would be handled by the building inspector, not the City

c. Public Comments – None

d. Commissioner Questions

Commissioner Buszka asked about the future development of 200 Blue Star Highway and whether there were any setback issues with the proposed development at 312 Ferry Street. Chair Balmer responded that the plans are conceptual at this stage. Commissioner Buszka also inquired about the environmental assessment report, and Chair Balmer requested that the environmental firm participating via Zoom address those questions.

- Motion to Close the Public Hearing (Roll Call Vote)

Motion by Seabert, seconded by O'Malley to close the Public Hearing

Motion by Hickey, seconded by Hanson to approve the request made by Nicholas Loeks of Bosch Construction on behalf of Consumers Credit Union for special land use approval for Drive-in/Drive Through under Section 26.12 of the City of the Village of Douglas Zoning Ordinance, based on the findings outlined in the staff report dated August 6, 2025, on the parcel identified as P.P. 59-016-069-00, located at 312 Ferry St., subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of a zoning permit, the applicant shall revise and resubmit the site plan to include the following items in accordance with Article 24 of the Zoning Ordinance:
 - Vicinity sketch showing the site's relationship to surrounding streets and land uses within 300'
 - A project completion timeline
2. The applicant shall obtain a zoning permit.
3. The applicant shall obtain a building permit from MTS before commencing construction.
4. The applicant shall obtain all other federal, state, and local permits if required.
5. Any change in use shall require site plan approval per Section 24.01 of the Zoning Ordinance.
6. Any proposed signage shall require a sign permit per Section 22.04 (A) of the Zoning Ordinance

7. The applicant shall obtain approval from the Allegan County Drain Commission
8. The applicant shall obtain approval from the Saugatuck/Douglas Fire Department
9. The applicant shall provide a description of existing contamination onsite related to the nature of contamination of material that would be need to be encountered or removed during construction according the zoning ordinance 24.02 (A) (3) (B) and subpart (C).
10. The applicant shall revise the site plan for a 25' setback on the north property line

Additional Discussion: Commissioners went through the questions with answers provided by the Planning & Zoning Administrator and Cindi Macdonald of Consumers Credit Union. Commissioners also provided input to resolve any known issues and an amendment was made to the motion to for the applicant to provide a 25' setback distance to the north.

Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

7. REPORTS

- A. Planning and Zoning Administrator Report – Planning & Zoning Administrator Sean Homyen provided an updated on the Safe Harbor Project.
- B. Planning Commissioner Remarks (limit 3 minutes each, please) – Commissioner Hanson asked the Planning & Zoning Administrator to inspect the property on the corner of Ferry and Center of a sign that was placed. Commissioner Peterson would like a status update from the Planning & Zoning Administrator of developments around the area.

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

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Seabert, seconded by Hickey to adjourn the meeting.