



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

The Planning Commission met for a Committee Meeting, November 20, 2025

At 6:30 p.m. at City Hall

102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453

1. Call to Order/Attendance:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Manns at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Commission members Bagierek, Baldwin, Gardner, Gaunt, LaChey, Manns, & Marineau.

Absent: None.

Others Present: Director of Planning & Zoning Moore, Deputy Clerk Williams, David Jirousek – online (Horizon Planning), Trent Cunningham – online (Fahey Schultz Burzich, Rhodes).

2. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Gaunt, second by Bagierek, to approve the meeting agenda for November 20, 2025. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Bagierek, second by LaChey, to amend the minutes from the previous meeting August 21, 2025, to remove "Special" from the header as it was a regular meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment (Agenda Items Only):

- Ethan Barde – Spoke in support of the 610 Lake St Land use approval and STR fraudulent complaints.

5. New Business:

A. 610 Lake – Public Hearing, Special Land Use for use of an Accessory Dwelling Unit as a Short-Term Rental.

Public Hearing

A. Hearing was called to order by Chair Manns on 11/20/25 at 6:35pm.

B. Summary by Zoning Director:

Director of Planning & Zoning Moore explained that the applicant is proposing to use an upper-level accessory dwelling unit (ADU) over an existing structure as a short-

term rental. Special land use approval is needed because the ADU would be rented separately from the main dwelling. Moore also noted that, according to the staff memo, the application appears to meet the standards required for site plan review and special land use approval for renting an ADU.

C. Presentation by the Applicant.

The applicant is CJ Bagierek, a fellow Planning Commissioner who recused himself from the vote and deliberation and also will be presenting the application. He explained that his property at 610 Lake Street previously operated under a short-term rental license for the entire house, in line with the rules at the time. Due to recent changes in STR regulations and their current usage, he now proposes to rent only the apartment (upper-level ADU), which is similar to a previous application for Mason Street. He clarified there have been no complaints about the property and that this change will mean a reduction in rental capacity.

D. Public comment regarding the application:

1. Supporting comments: Ethan Barde spoke during public comment in support of the application.
2. Opposing comments: Letters received from John & Bonnie Martell, Mark Jak, Jeff & Diana Cottrell, Laura Glaza, Iris Allen, & Art Nicholas.
3. General comments: None.
4. Repeat comment opportunity (Supporting, Opposing, General): None.

E. Public comment portion closed by Chair Manns at 6:39pm.

F. Commission deliberation:

The commission deliberated on the 610 Lake Street application for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) as a short-term rental was consistent with prior approvals and met all ordinance requirements. They clarified that the request was not a zoning change, addressing public concerns. Commissioners emphasized the importance of transparent communication and unanimously agreed the application satisfied all necessary standards.

G. Commission action:

Motion by Baldwin, second by Marineau, to approve the special land use request to allow the rental of detached upper-level ADU at 610 Lake Street based on compliance with the ADU rental requirements of Section 154.092 J, satisfaction of site plan approval standards of Section 154.080 that are documented in the staff memo dated November 14, 2025.

Upon roll call vote, motion carried 6-0 (Bagierek recused himself from vote & deliberation).

B. 510 Butler: Public Hearing, Special Land Use, & Site Plan Review.

Public Hearing

A. Hearing was called to order by Chair Manns on 11/20/25 at 6:43pm.

B. Summary by Zoning Director:

Director of Planning & Zoning Moore summarized that the applicant at 510 Butler Street is seeking special land use approval to serve alcoholic beverages at their existing Bed and Breakfast, with the goal of obtaining a resort liquor license from the state. He explained that alcohol service would be offered mainly to overnight guests, events, and brunch/lunch guests. Grayson highlighted that the commission should consider whether this proposal fits the definition and intent of a Bed and Breakfast under local ordinances and if allowing alcohol service could set unintended precedents.

C. Presentation by the Applicant.

The applicant Mike Friedman (CFO of Wickwood Inn) explained that they are requesting special land use approval to serve alcoholic beverages at the Bed and Breakfast, intending to obtain a liquor license for the benefit of their guests. He emphasized Wickwood Inn's investment in the property, their support for the local community, and asked the commission for approval to move forward with the licensing process.

D. Public comment regarding the application:

5. Supporting comments: Letter received from Felicia Fairchild.
6. Opposing comments: None.
7. General comments: None.
8. Repeat comment opportunity (Supporting, Opposing, General): None.

E. Public comment portion closed by Chair Manns at 6:57pm.

F. Commission deliberation:

The commission deliberated extensively on the 510 Butler Street application, debating whether serving alcohol at the Wickwood Inn fits the zoning definition and intended use of a Bed and Breakfast or crosses into hotel/inn territory. Commissioners expressed concerns about hosting outside events and serving alcohol to non-guests, which would exceed what the zoning allows for a Bed and Breakfast.

They cited a need for clearer definitions and more information about the applicant's exact plans.

G. Commission action:

Motion by Bagierek to postpone the special land use application for 510 Butler Street and 120 Mary Street for up to 60 days with the following conditions:

- 1. Provide a copy of any licensing material submitted to Michigan Liquor Control Commission.*
- 2. Have the definition of what a bed and breakfast is with alcohol service.*
- 3. Define what their alcohol license is (Trent will put together)*
- 4. Present an understanding of the zoning expectations with regard to being a bed and breakfast.*

Commissioner LaChey provided a friendly amendment, to add an additional condition:

- 5. The applicant to present understanding of the zoning conditions with who will be served, where they will be served, and when they will be served on the premises.*

Motion by Bagierek, seconded by LaChey to postpone the special land use application for 510 Butler Street and 120 Mary Street for up to 60 days with the following conditions:

- 1. Provide a copy of any licensing material submitted to Michigan Liquor Control Commission.*
- 2. Have the definition of what a bed and breakfast is with alcohol service.*
- 3. Define what their alcohol license is (Trent will put together)*
- 4. Present an understanding of the zoning expectations with regard to being a bed and breakfast.*
- 5. The applicant to present understanding of the zoning conditions with who will be served, where they will be served, and when they will be served on the premises.*

Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

6. Old Business:

A. Master Plan – Proposed Project Scope:

The Commission discussed the proposed project scope for the City's Master Plan. They reviewed the initial phase's public outreach and research activities, including surveys, interviews, and land use studies. Commissioners emphasized the need for broad and balanced community participation in roundtables and focus groups. The timeline aims for

completion by the end of August, with ongoing analysis, workshops, and continued public input to ensure the plan reflects diverse community interests.

B. Sign Ordinance – Updated Draft & Discussion:

The Commission and Attorney Cunningham reviewed and discussed an updated draft of the city’s sign ordinance, focusing on legal compliance and clear, fair standards for signage. Key topics included limits on the size and number of signs, how to handle illuminated and neon signs, right-of-way permitting, temporary and portable signs, flags murals, and enforcement details. Consensus was reached on most issues, and the commission requested a few final revisions before moving toward a public hearing on the ordinance.

7. Communications:

All communications are located in the public hearing information included in the Old and New Business sections of the meeting minutes.

8. Reports of Officers and Committees: None.

9. Public Comments: None.

10. Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Gardner: He is glad to be back on the Planning Commission, and it is good to see some friendly faces. He is looking forward to working with them again.
- Commissioner Baldwin: He welcomed Russ Gardner back to the commission and expressed appreciation for the collaborative discussion on the Wickwood Inn application, noting that the exchange of ideas helped shape the group’s decision and led to a positive outcome.
- Commissioner Marineau: He welcomed Russ Gardner back to the Planning Commission, expressed appreciation for his experience – especially for the upcoming Master Plan process – echoed support for Commissioner Baldwin’s positive comments about the Wickwood discussion, and thanked Trent for his efforts on the sign ordinance.
- Commissioner LaChey: He expressed gratitude to Councilman Joe Clark for his thoughtful and reasonable service on the Planning Commission and wished him well in his future endeavors.
- Commissioner Bagierek: He echoed appreciation for fellow commissioners, welcomed Russ Gardner back, and remarked that it was a good meeting with constructive conversation on difficult issues.
- Commissioner Gaunt: She thanked her fellow commissioners for their dedication, shared her appreciation after watching the previous October meeting – especially the thoughtful discussion on the sign ordinance – and expressed gratitude to Trent and Grayson for their contributions and the positive results of their work.
- Chair Manns: He welcomed Russ Gardner, thanked Joe Clark for his service, and noted the value council representatives bring to the commission. He reflected on the meeting as an example of

how the commission carefully follows ordinances and thoughtfully handles approvals, denials, or postponements.

11. Adjournment:

Motion by Gaunt, second by Bagierek, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Chair Manns adjourned the meeting at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, Deputy Clerk