

Minutes of the Gaines Charter Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting held January 22nd, 2026, at 7 pm

8555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rober, Haagsma, Giarmo, Billips, Waayenberg

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thomas and Wiersema, with notice.

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Wells, Community Development Director; Dakota Swan, Assistant Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Giarmo called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

2. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

Consideration of the December 18th, 2025, regular Planning Commission meeting minutes.

Motion: Motion by Haagsma, supported by Rober to approve the minutes of December 18th, 2025.

DISCUSSION:

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

DECISION: Motion Carried (5-0)

4. INQUIRY OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. Public Hearing; 6729 Hanna Lake Avenue SE – Special Use Permit, Electronic Messaging Center in Suburban Residential

Mike Tiesma of Midwest Sign Company explained that the request for a special use permit to allow for an electronic changeable message center (ECM) follows on the heels of a recent text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, also requested by Midwest Sign Company. Regulations and requirements for ECM's became more restrictive in the updated Zoning Ordinance (Adopted April 2025) and prohibit ECM's in residential zoning districts; Midwest Sign company amended the Zoning Ordinance to allow ECM's in residential zoning districts, only for institutional users, with the issuance of a special use permit. The proposed special use permit is associated with a 36 square-foot ECM for Dutton Christian School. Tiesma clarified that the sign will be compliant with the updated hours of operation as outlined in the text amendment, and it will be located near the entrance on 68th Street.

Planner Wells noted that all applicable standards of review pertaining to both signage and lighting have been satisfied, and that ECM's are fairly typical for institutional users in the Township. The proposed use is compatible with nearby land uses, and staff has determined that the request is consistent with the intent of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Giarmo opened and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Waayenberg said that since the Zoning Ordinance was recently amended to accommodate requests as such, and since all applicable standards of review are met, he does not see anything about this application that raises question or concern.

Motion: Motion by Waayenberg, supported by Haagsma to approve the request for a special use permit at 6729 Hanna Lake Avenue to allow for an ECM sign in the Suburban Residential zoning district without conditions.

DISCUSSION:

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

DECISION: Motion Carried (5-0)

B. Public Hearing; 8390 84th Street – Zoning Reversion

Planner Wells explained that the request for a zoning reversion at 8390 84th Street has been initiated administratively, therefore there is no applicant for this project. In 2022 the subject parcel was conditionally rezoned from Low-Density Residential (RL-10) to Neighborhood Commercial (NC) with the intention of building a neighborhood gathering space on the property. Negotiations took place in hopes that the property owner would be able to acquire additional land for a septic drain field, as public sewer service is available across the street, but it would be prohibitively expensive for the property owner to connect. The owner still desires to undertake this project; however, more time and finances are necessary to bring the project into fruition.

Section 31.50.G of the Gaines Charter Township Zoning Ordinance stipulates that if no significant progress is made within one year of conditional rezoning approval, the subject parcel will revert back to the previous zoning designation. In this case, the parcel would revert back to RL-10, which constitutes as Suburban Residential zoning under the current ordinance. Wells noted that the property owner expressed a desire to rezone the property to straight Neighborhood Commercial zoning, which accounts for his intended end use, and would offer flexibility in setback requirements, as conditional rezonings entail very restrictive and specific dimensional requirements. This agenda item serves as two processes in one: reverting the conditional rezoning in tandem with a rezoning to Neighborhood Commercial.

Wells stated that both actions associated with this request are consistent with the intent of both the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance; this parcel is future zoned for Neighborhood Commercial use, and the action will not have any negative impacts on surrounding properties. Staff finds that rezoning this parcel to NC is more appropriate than leaving it zoned residentially, given the location, layout of the parcel, and surrounding land uses.

Chair Giarmo opened and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Haagsma inquired to clarify that this agenda item will require two motions and two recommendations to the Township Board, which Planner Wells confirmed.

Chair Giarmo noted that at the time of the initial rezoning, a conditional rezone was preferable by the Planning Commission to ensure that the use of the property would be appropriate. Permitted uses in the Neighborhood Commercial zoning district have since been modified to reflect appropriate commercial or office uses in a neighborhood setting, which negates the need for a conditional rezone this time around; the Planning Commission finds that any use permitted in the NC zoning district would be appropriate for the subject property.

Motion: Motion by Waayenberg, supported by Haagsma, to make a recommendation that the Township Board rescind the conditional rezone issued in 2022 for 8390 84th Street SE.

DISCUSSION:

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

DECISION: Motion Carried (5-0)

Motion: Motion by Haagsma, supported by Rober, to make a positive recommendation to the Township Board for a rezoning from Suburban Residential (SR) to Neighborhood Commercial (NC) at 8390 84th Street SE.

DISCUSSION:

AYES: All

NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
DECISION: Motion Carried (5-0)

C. Public Hearing; 900 100th Street – Annual Review, Stoneco 100th Street Operation

Stoneco of Michigan is required to appear before the Sand and Gravel Subcommittee and the Planning Commission for an annual review and operating plan. The Sand and Gravel Subcommittee met on December 10th, 2025, and made a positive recommendation to the Planning Commission for the 2025 Annual Review and 2026 Operating Plan. Application materials indicate that rehabilitation and restoration work will begin at the north end of the parcel in 2026 as mining operations move southward. Stoneco intends to use topsoil removed from the south end of the parcel to fill mined areas at the north end of the parcel.

Chair Giarmo opened and closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Rober inquired about when the site may be buildable; Planner Wells noted that the site may be best suited for open space preservation, as installing septic infrastructure after restoration is often challenging. Commissioner Waayenberg inquired about whether staff has received any complaints from neighbors about the mine; Planner Wells responded that there were some complaints when land was being cleared and stumps were being burned, but besides that, staff has not received any complaints about the operation.

Commissioner Haagsma inquired about removal of the 100-foot setback on the site; Planner Wells responded that the 100-foot setback depicted on the corresponding site plans is likely a remnant of Stoneco’s original site plan and should not be on the current materials. Stoneco intends to get rid of setbacks to level out the existing berm as best as they can. Planner Wells clarified that Stoneco has collaborated with adjacent property owners on this matter. Chair Giarmo inquired to clarify that Stoneco anticipates being finished extracting materials from this site by the end of 2026; Planner Wells confirmed this and clarified that they have run out of material on this site to warrant further mining.

Motion: Motion by Waayenberg, supported by Rober to approve the 2025/2026 Annual Report and Operating Plan for Stoneco of Michigan’s 100th Street Operation, located at 10287 Kalamazoo Avenue SE.

DISCUSSION:

AYES: All
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
DECISION: Motion Carried (5-0)

D. 6925 Dutton Industrial Drive – Site Plan Review – Kamps Hardwoods Expansion

Brock Mellema of FCC Construction Company explained that Kamps Hardwoods is expanding their facilities to increase storage space for raw materials awaiting production. At the December 18th, 2025, Planning Commission meeting, this request for site plan review was postponed due to inconsistencies and noncompliance in the provided site plans. Mellema noted that the two buildings proposed to be within rear setbacks have since been addressed, in addition to parking modifications.

Commissioner Waayenberg inquired about the Township Engineer's report and whether the Planning Commission should impose a condition of approval requiring the applicant to get approval from the Township Engineer; Planner Wells responded that the applicant will be required to adhere to the Township Engineer's feedback regardless of if a condition is imposed.

Motion: Motion by Waayenberg, supported by Billips to approve the site plan review for Kamps Hardwoods' 28,647 square-foot expansion, located at 6925 Dutton Industrial Drive, with no conditions.

DISCUSSION:

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

DECISION: Motion Carried (5-0)

7. General Discussion

Planner Wells offered the Planning Commission a preview of the meeting agenda for February 26th, 2026.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the minutes from the January 22nd, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting of the Gaines Charter Township Planning Commission held at the time and place mentioned above pursuant to the required statutory procedures.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lani Thomas". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Lani Thomas,

Secretary

Gaines Charter Township Planning Commission

Date: February 26, 2026