



Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes Draft – APPROVED

May 21, 2026, at 6:30 P.M.

Saugatuck City Hall, 102 Butler St, Saugatuck, MI 49453

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

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

Members Present: Baldwin, Bagierek, Gardner, LaChey, Manns

Members Absent: Marineau

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning Director Moore, City Clerk Wolters

Others Present: Trent Cunningham (Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC), David Jirousek (Horizon Planning)

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by LaChey, supported by Baldwin, to approve the agenda as presented for the May 21, 2026, meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 5-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Baldwin, supported by Bagierek, to approve the April 9, 2026, minutes as presented. Via voice vote, motion carried 5-0.

4. Public Comment

5. New Business

A. 405 Park St – Permit Extension Request

The Commission reviewed a request to extend the previously approved site plan for 405 Park Street, originally approved in 2025. Planning and Zoning Director Moore explained that the applicant needed a one-year extension because their soil erosion and sediment control permit from the state had been delayed, but they intend to begin construction as soon as that permit is issued. He clarified that under the ordinance, the Planning Commission must authorize such extensions, and once they do, no further approvals are required. Commissioners noted that the revised materials showed only minor changes which actually reduced the project scope and were comfortable treating them as minor. Gardner asked what would happen if construction still had not started by September 2026; Moore said that, while unlikely, the applicant would probably need to reapply under a new application due to how the ordinance is written. Moore and Chair Manns both indicated they understood the state permit was close to final, and Manns relayed that the applicant hoped to start construction in June, before the fourth of July.

Motion by Baldwin, supported by LaChey, to approve the applicants' request for the extension of PZ24071 as amended for a period of one (1) year. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 5-0.

- B. 510 Butler/120 Mary (Wickwood Inn) – Special Land Use Request Sale of Alcoholic Beverages
Motion by LaChey, supported by Bagierek, to amend the agenda and add a Public Hearing to consider the 510 Butler/120 Mary St (Wickwood Inn) – Special land use request for the sale of alcoholic beverages. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearing

- A. Hearing was called to order by Chair Manns on 5/21/26 at 6:42 p.m.

- B. Summary by Zoning Director

Moore recapped the background and scope of the 510 Butler/120 Mary Street (Wickwood Inn) request. He explained that the application had previously come before the Planning Commission in November as a special land use, but after that the applicant tried an alternative approach by seeking a rezoning, which was recently denied by the City Council. As a result, the applicant has not reapplied for special land use approval specifically to allow the service of alcoholic beverages in association with the existing bed and breakfast. Moore noted that this property is in the R-4 Transitional District, where alcohol service requires a special land use. He emphasized that while the Planning Commission's role is to recommend action, final approval of any liquor-related requests rests with the City Council. He also clarified that the request is limited to service for overnight guests only, and that no matter what type of state liquor license is obtained, the inn must still comply with all local zoning restrictions.

- C. Presentation by the Applicant

Chris Khorey (McKenna, representing Wickwood Inn) explained that the request is solely for special land use approval to serve alcoholic beverages under Wickwood's existing bed-and-breakfast operations, and is separate from the denied rezoning. He outlined the current rules: in the R-4 district, Wickwood may serve food and non-alcoholic drinks only to overnight guests, breakfast must be included in the room rate, and any additional meals, special food services, or events must also be limited to those registered guests. The proposal is that alcohol service would follow these exact same limits, with any liquor sales still subject to Michigan Liquor Control requirements. Khorey clarified process details: because of the alcohol component, the Planning Commission's action would be a recommendation, with final approval by City Council, and the state liquor license process would move concurrently with the local special use. He noted that, since no physical changes are proposed, site plan approval would be folded into the special land use, rather than handled separately. Using floor plans and photos, he described where food and drink are served (primarily the dining room, with other interior and outdoor spaces used occasionally for guest-only functions) and summarized how the request meets special use standards: it keeps service incidental to the inn, enhances the economic viability and preservation of historic structures, may reduce drunk driving and public intoxication by allowing guests to drink on-site, and does not expand the use beyond a traditional guest-only bed-and-breakfast model.

D. Public comment regarding the application

1. Supporting Comments: None
2. Opposing comments: None
3. General Comments: None
4. Repeat Comment Opportunity: None

E. Public comment portion closed by the Chair at 6:53 p.m.

F. Commission Deliberation

During deliberation, the Commission discussed how to allow alcohol service at Wickwood Inn while keeping it clearly limited to its bed-and-breakfast role. Commissioners generally supported the request, noting that many B&B's traditionally offer wine or similar hospitality and that the applicant was making a strong effort to be fully compliant. They focused on safeguards: ensuring alcohol service is only for registered overnight guests, capping any event attendance at the inn's maximum capacity of 28 guests, and setting a 10:00 p.m. cutoff for outdoor service to protect neighborhood character and be consistent with past approvals like "The Cottage." There was debate over a proposed condition that would have prohibited selling alcohol by the glass or outside the room charge; Christ Khorey explained this would create operational and billing problems and was more restrictive than existing food-and-beverage rules for B&B's. After discussion, commissioners agreed that controlling who is served and how late was more important than dictating the exact billing structure, and they were comfortable removing that "no sale by the glass/outside room charge" condition while retaining limits that keep service incidental to the inn and guest-only.

G. Commission action

Motion by LaChey, second by Baldwin, to recommend approval of the special land use to allow the service of alcoholic beverages at the Wickwood Inn bed and breakfast establishment. This motion is based on compliance with Section 1584.092 P and on the positive findings related to the special land use standards of approval in Section 154.082, as documented in the staff memo dated May 15, 2026. The following conditions apply to this approval:

- 1. The applicant shall secure the appropriate license from the State of Michigan Liquor Control Commission.*
- 2. Alcoholic beverages shall only be served to overnight guests of the Wickwood Inn, at the stated capacity of 28, as a part of the regular meal service.*
- 3. Alcohol service shall not be sold by the glass or offered for purchase outside of the standard room charge.*
- 4. Alcohol service shall remain incidental and accessory to the bed and breakfast use.*
- 5. Outdoor service of alcohol shall not be permitted after 10:00 p.m.*

During deliberation, the applicant requested removal of Condition No. 3, which prohibited alcoholic beverages from being sold by the glass or offered for purchase outside of the standard room charge. Following discussion, the Planning Commission agreed to amend the motion and proceed with the revised conditions listed below.

Motion by LaChey, second by Baldwin, to amend the original motion and to recommend approval of the special land use to allow the service of alcoholic beverages at the Wickwood Inn bed and breakfast establishment. This motion is based on compliance with Section 1584.092 P and on the positive findings related to the special land use standards of approval in Section 154.082, as documented in the staff memo dated May 15, 2026. The following conditions apply to this approval:

- 1. The applicant shall secure the appropriate license from the State of Michigan Liquor Control Commission.*
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- 3. Alcohol service shall remain incidental and accessory to the bed and breakfast use.*
- 4. Outdoor service of alcohol shall not be permitted after 10:00 p.m.*

Upon roll call vote, motion carried 5-0.

6. Old Business

A. Master Plan Discussion

David Jirousek described the Planning Commission's ongoing master plan update work, focusing on a new mobility memo that serves as a progress report on one major topic area. He explained that the memo covers walking, biking, pathways, transit, transportation, parking, and connectivity, heavily informed by community survey results. Those results show strong use of and satisfaction with downtown walkability, but interest in better sidewalks and crossings in neighborhoods, and especially high support for a multi-use path connection to Oval Beach along Perryman and Park Streets. Residents also see value in expanding public transit (buses/trolleys) and preserving the chain ferry as part of the transportation system, while many feel parking is not convenient during peak times. Jirousek noted that he and Director of Planning and Zoning, Moore, will cross-check survey comments against the sidewalk/pathway map to identify gaps and then suggest priority projects that can later feed into the City's capital improvement planning. He emphasized that the master plan should be visionary but realistic – identifying long-term needs even if all improvements can be built immediately – and that upcoming topic memos will cover areas such as housing, infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, community facilities, and economic development, all leading into a refined future land use map that builds on the earlier character and area analysis.

7. Communication

Bobbie Gaunt letter

8. Reports of Officers and Committees

A. Parking Improvements Task Force: None

9. Public Comments

None

10. Commissioner Comments

- Bagierek said it was a good meeting and that he sees the Commission making solid progress. He specifically noted that he is pleased with the headway on the master plan and thanked everyone for their work.
- Baldwin briefly shifted away from planning topics to mention that he has been tapped to handle race day operations for the Mount Baldhead Challenge because the organizer took another job. He told fellow commissioners who have volunteered to help on the course – mentioning Russ Gardner – that they should go onto RunSignUp to select and reserve their preferred course locations, explaining that he is working to fill out the volunteer roster.
- Gardner responded to Baldwin's announcement about the Mount Baldhead race by confirming that he will again volunteer at the top of Mount Baldhead, as he has in past years, and said he had no other comments beyond that.
- LaChey thought it was a good meeting.
- Manns said he thought it was a good meeting and that he was glad the Commission could help move the Wickwood Inn request forward. He reiterated that he looks forward to continuing work on the master plan. He also highlighted the upcoming community pride events in the first week of June, noting that both Douglas and the City of Saugatuck will be very active, with many organizations involved and multiple activities planned. He said he was pleased to see that level of participation and encouraged everyone to come out and take part.

11. Adjournment

Motion by Gardner, supported by Bagierek, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Submitted by:

Sara Williams

Deputy Clerk

City of Saugatuck