

To: City of the Village of Douglas Planning Commission

Date: August 6, 2025

From: Sean Homyen, Planning & Zoning Administrator

RE: **453 Center St – Site Plan Review – Converting front portion of the home from a non-conforming use to a conforming use.**



The Village of Friendliness – Since 1870

Request. Andrea Johnson-Wardynski has submitted an application for site plan review under Section 24.01 for the conversion of the front portion of the home from a non-conforming use to a conforming use for the property at 453 Center St, located in the C-1 Village Commercial District.

Background. The property at 453 Center St is a two-story single-family home, currently zoned R-5. Based on the assessing records, the home was constructed in 1873. The applicant has inquired about opening an Italian shaving storefront at this location. Instead of waiting for the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance to be updated. The applicant moved forward with what is allowed through the current ordinance. The applicant went through the process earlier this year by rezoning the property from R-5 Multiple Family District to C-1 Village Commercial District. A recommendation from the Planning Commission was received on February 20, 2025, and approval from Council was on April 7, 2025.



Procedure. The Planning Commission is tasked with reviewing the site plan providing an approval, with or without conditions, denial, or tabling of the request.

Storefront. The applicant is requesting to convert the 182-square-foot (13' x 14') covered porch for business operations, with an additional 164.7 square feet (12' x 13.7') designated for storage in the front of the home. They are also proposing a picnic area to the west of the home. The Planning Commission will determine whether the proposed change in use from residential to commercial is acceptable.

Landscaping. Because the property is now classified as commercial, screening is required where it abuts residential lots. Existing fencing is located along the southern property line. The Planning Commission will determine whether the proposed trees provide sufficient buffering or if the applicant must complete the fencing. Any fencing must comply with the requirements of Section 21.01(12) of the Zoning Ordinance.

As the property is located on a corner lot, street trees are required along both rights-of-way, with one tree required for every 30 linear feet of frontage. Based on frontage, four trees are required along Ferry Street and four along Center Street. The property currently has three trees along Ferry Street (two of which are located within the right-of-way) and eight trees along Center Street. The Planning Commission will determine whether the trees within the right-of-way on Ferry St. may be counted toward meeting the street tree requirement.

Parking. As part of the site plan review, parking requirements must be evaluated in accordance with Section 10.04 of the Zoning Ordinance. Parking spaces must be provided unless a waiver is formally requested and granted by the Planning Commission.

Per Section 10.04(b)(1), one and two-family dwellings require two spaces per dwelling unit. For restaurants, one space is required for every three seats (based on occupancy as determined by the Fire Chief), plus one space per employee on the largest shift.

The applicant is proposing two employees, which would require one parking space for the restaurant use. The single-family home is a nonconforming use and would typically require two parking spaces; however, Section 10.04(b)(1) does not apply to nonconforming uses. Nevertheless, the Planning Commission may reduce the required parking under Section 19.03 and allow one space for the residence, if appropriate.

It should be noted that the two homeowners will both live and work on the property. The driveway is large enough to accommodate all three required spaces, should the Planning Commission choose not to waive any parking requirements.

RECOMMENDATION.

At the upcoming meeting, the Planning Commission will review the site plan. Commissioners should carefully consider the information presented in this report, as well as comments from the applicant and the public. If the Planning Commission concurs that the standards of the ordinance have been met, staff recommends approval located at 453 W Center St, subject to the following conditions as shown in the suggested motion.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Suggested Motion. I move to [approve / approve with conditions / deny / 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, based on the findings outlined in the staff report dated August 6, 2025, on the parcel identified as P.P. 59-350-001-00, located at 453 Center St., subject to the following conditions:

- The applicant shall obtain a building permit from Michigan Township Services for the Change of Use
- The applicant shall obtain approval from the Saugatuck/Douglas Fire Department
- Any proposed signage shall require a sign permit per Section 22.04 (A) of the Zoning Ordinance
- The applicant shall all other federal, state, and local permits if required

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.