

CITY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 1:00 PM

City Hall – Council Chambers, 7358 Market St., Mackinac Island, Michigan

I. Call to Order

Chairman Straus called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

II. Roll Call

PRESENT

Trish Martin

Jim Pettit

Michael Straus

Anneke Myers

Mary Dufina

ABSENT

Lee Finkel

Staff: David Lipovsky, Erin Evashevski

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. March 10, 2026

Motion to approve as written.

Motion made by Dufina, Seconded by Myers.

Voting Yea: Martin, Pettit, Straus, Myers, Dufina

V. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to approve as amended. Move New Business between B and C due to Straus having to leave at 3:00. Pettit would like to add Code Enforcement at the end.

Motion made by Martin, Seconded by Dufina.

Voting Yea: Martin, Pettit, Straus, Myers, Dufina

VI. Correspondence

None.

VII. Staff Report

a. HDC Meeting Summary

Lindsey White summarized the HDC meeting.

b. DPW Update

Allen Burt shared his screen. Most work this month has been moving snow and finding equipment. Work has slowed but is starting to pick up again. They are starting to bypass pumps to pipe in the new ones. We have filed notice with EGLE that the plant will start up in 60 days. They will start establishing the organisms soon. Still on schedule and no budget changes. The project will continue through the summer in the old facility. Let Run order for water has been lifted.

VIII. Committee Reports

None.

IX. Old Business

a. C25-053-110(H) Trayser New Cafe

Straus stated this was approved by HDC. Lipovsky gave an update to the coal dock egress. His concern is how easily that egress could be blocked off. The alley question is who owns it and is it actually an alley. If you go down the alley past the choke point, Seabiscuit has a cooler there and when loading the cooler the food would block the access. Myers stated it is on the life safety plan. Lipovsky does not have a problem with what they propose but isn't sure on the egress. Myers said we cannot approve without written agreement on the alley use. Myers asked Lipovsky how many points of egress are needed. Based on the travel distance, they would need all three that they are currently showing. Myers asked where in the ordinance that is required. Lipovsky stated that is required on the building end of that. Evashevski stated the ordinance adopts the building code. Pettit confirmed signage would be required for exits. Devan Anderson stated in terms of egress the exits are for out of the building, and if your out on the deck, your already out of the building. Lipovsky did not agree with that. If the cafe is on fire, and you are on the deck, how do you escape the fire. Anderson stated the ends are graded and they could create paths for exit. Anderson stated they have given up on the coal dock egress and are relying on the building exits and the alley. They are willing to get an agreement in writing to allow the use of the alley. Straus is concerned with only having a small alley for exit. It is a narrow space if alot of people need to get out. Pettit believes the coal dock was the best exit but Anderson stated there was alot of problems associated with using that. Evashevski stated there are alot of people involved. They were not saying it isn't possible, but the process of getting that approved would probably be expensive and the City does not want to pay for that. Evashevski wanted to be clear that she or the Planning Commission do not have the ability to say yes or no, for the City. Evashevski stated the City has an escrow ordinance for situations like this. Anderson stated they are willing to keep the conversation open but it seemed a deal breaker. A possible alternate egress would be off the back deck. Anderson stated there was a question about capacity. The size

of the egress has a capacity of 150 people. Lipovsky agreed with that. Anderson stated there is a maximum capacity of 100 that would be using that alley. Straus asked about EMS and the gurney going through the building. Lipovsky was not able to find the answer on that. Myers read aloud the section relating to this. Anderson stated help would take place on the street side of the building. Pettit stated this sounds like a huge project. They are likely to find bones and if they have a month long shut down, half the sidewalk would be shut down for the summer season. How can they make sure they have a plan in this event. Anderson has reached out to the State historic office and they have people and processes for excavation. They have a plan B and plan C. Trayser stated he also has a great relationship with the tribe. Myers stated they would just have to shut the project down. Myers stated the applicant has not wanted to make changes on the interior but they may have to, to accommodate a stretcher. Anderson stated as shown on page 34 there are multiple straight shots to take a stretcher. Dufina suggested the applicant meet with EMS to see what they need. Myers asked Evashevski if the alley presents any issues with the City. She sees more issues with the coal dock, but there would also be issues that would need to be arranged with the city on the coal dock. Evashevski is not sure how it is currently being used. Myers stated the Seabiscuit has been using it and Trayser is looking for the same use. Evashevski thinks there will have to be discussions with the city and the Callewaert family on the alley. Her major concerns are the same as Lipovsky and being able to get through there. Myers would like to see an amended plan showing egresses. The Commission could approve contingent on Lipovsky approving egress, or table until further egress information is provided. Motion to table for another month to give the attorney time to work on the alley issue and Lipovsky and Anderson to work on egress and EMS answers.

Motion made by Straus, Seconded by Dufina.

Voting Yea: Martin, Pettit, Straus, Myers, Dufina

b. MD26-031-012(H) Patrick Doud Pub Garden

Andrew Doud addressed the issues from last month. Doud stated he thought the only issue was the liquor control map. Doud was not able to get that but will send tomorrow. The only place that alcohol will be served is in the area in the front. There will be no area in the back of the building that could be used. The A/C unit will be removed and Myers asked Doud to remove it from the plan. The alley is part of the property of the Lilac House. Myers requested a map showing the property, and a drawing without the A/C. Doud would like it part of the minutes that he will remove the A/C. Motion to approve the pub, contingent on removing the ac unit and the applicant providing the liquor control map.

Motion made by Myers, Seconded by Pettit.

Voting Yea: Martin, Pettit, Straus, Myers, Dufina

c. Zoning Ordinance Amendment re ZBA Alternate Members

Motion for a recommendation to adopt the presented change with some other items the Council should consider:

1-adopt procedures for the ZBA alternate member appointment process

2-how alternates would be used

3-recommend an odd number of members to avoid a tie. suggest possibly 5 people. if allowed by zoning enabling act, 5 city council members.

Motion made by Myers, Seconded by Pettit.

Voting Yea: Martin, Pettit, Straus, Myers, Dufina

X. New Business

- a. C26-049-020(H) Benjamin Density Variance & Standard Zoning for two new Apartments

Myers stepped down from the table.

Mike Benjamin stated the building built before 1905, needs a lot of work. Fire suppression is being added to the entire building. Wall on the back side of basement to block the lake from entering the basement. The variance is because there has been employee housing since the 70's. That apartment has always had a little kitchen. In reading of the rules, boarding houses don't have kitchens. Evashevski stated that they can't have cooking facilities, it is a kitchen makes a dwelling. You can have a dwelling with boardinghouse use. With the kitchen you have a limited number of dwellings due to allowable density. Adding two more apartments takes this over density. The issue here is you can have two apartments and also have boardinghouse with no kitchen. Benjamin stated they believe that is a bad idea. If they do not provide a way to cook, the employees will find a way to cook which is not safe. The variance would be to have 3 dwelling units. Straus stated they are trying to promote boardinghouses above businesses and would love to find a way to make it work. Evashevski stated an easy solution is to just add one apartment. Evashevski stated this was discussed for many months. The concern here was the possibilities of the options that could be done here. If there is a kitchen, it is considered a dwelling unit, however it is being used. Benjamin asked for the process of the variance. Straus told him the process. If the applicant would like to proceed with a variance we need to know what exactly the variance is. The variance is for 3 dwelling units in a building that permits 2. Motion to send to ZBA with no recommendation. Due to no support the motion died. Motion to send variance request with the recommendation to approve due to the need for employee housing and to encourage employee housing on Main Street above businesses which is consistent with the Master Plan. This particular housing has been in use before the Zoning Ordinance. Pettit voted no because the applicant stated he could make more money if he had a second apartment. So that would be so he could make more money which is not allowed for the variance.

Motion made by Dufina, Seconded by Martin.

Voting Yea: Martin, Straus, Dufina

Voting Nay: Pettit

Voting Abstaining: Myers

Evashevski stated the next ZBA meeting is in June. We have 100 days to act on this application. We need to make sure we have a written extension if they cannot be on the June ZBA meeting. Benjamin agreed to extend and Evashevski is to come up with the wording needed from the applicant. She suggested 180 days. April 27th is deadline to get on June ZBA meeting.

The applicant wanted the Commission to review the buildings today, contingent on the ZBA decision. The staging was shown with arrows on the plans. Matt Myers stated there will be a 2-footer by the taxi stand and on the street. This would be removed for Bazaar. They will be excavating under the building for foundation work. No work on the seawall. Benjamin stated it is similar to what they did with the Mighty Mac. Materials could be staged behind the business. Martin asked for a written reply to the staging plan. The plan presented shows the staging plan and retracts what he just said about staging. Matt Myers stated they should go by the plans presented. Dufina asked about getting materials to the site. The material would be stored on the coal dock and then moved to the site when needed. A small piece of equipment will be brought in for the excavating. There were no concerns by Lipovsky. Pettit asked for a drawing for the disposal of gravel. Motion by Dufina, second by Martin, to approve the zoning contingent on the results of the ZBA and for the written construction and staging plan including removal. Roll call vote: Ayes: Straus, Dufina, Martin, Myers. Nays: Pettit. Abstain: Myers. Majority in favor. Motion carries.

Myers returned to the table.

Straus stepped down from the table at 2:50 to catch the last boat.

XI. Public Comment

Pettit brought up the garbage ordinance. 10:00 and 4:00 and 4:00 includes recyclables. The goal is to limit the amount of time garbage is visible to the public. Pettit is once again asking for the ordinance to be included with the business license applications. Myers stated those have already gone out. Pettit suggested doing things like taking pictures of garbage left out and send to business owner. Pettit suggested having someone in charge of enforcing this ordinance. Doud stated even though the time is 4:00, they sometimes don't come until 6. Pettit isn't sure of the answer but thinks someone should be made in charge of this. Myers said we could write a letter to the chief telling him about the ordinance and suggest he work with Carriage Tours with pick up times throughout town. Maybe set up zones. Doud wanted to address the winter schedule as well. The ordinance only refers to the summer. Myers suggested asking council to put this on streets and sidewalks committee agenda before going to the Chief. Motion to send letter to City Council asking them to set a streets and sidewalks meeting to discuss how to better facilitate trash pickup and to Involve the Chief and Carriage Tours.

Motion made by Myers, Seconded by Pettit.
Voting Yea: Martin, Pettit, Straus, Myers

Pettit was approached by a resident that an employee wanted to return but she was told there was no housing available that allowed dogs. He does agree that allowing pets does change the neighborhood. Pettit stated his employer is not allowing pets, but across the street at Hoban Hill pets are allowed. How do we enforce our rules and codes. Pettit handed out the rental ordinance. It states every rental unit must register the unit by May 1. There is a way of enforcing and inspecting by following our ordinance. It is our duty to make sure everyone is playing the same game. Myers stated the ordinance committee met in March and they are discussing this rental ordinance. If reported to the Lipovsky he can check it out.

Andrew Doud stated there are some things that are not standards for the planning commission, such as the May house relationship to the road. Doud would like to bring up the necessity of having standards that the Planning Commission follows. He would like to bring this up at the next meeting: Things that don't have standards and should. Evashevski argued that the standards are clear and for the example for standard 20.06 Evashevski read it aloud. She stated Doud offered the taxi stand. Dufina didn't understand what Doud meant by standards. Evashevski stated there are very clear standards in the ordinance.

XII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 3:17 PM.

Michael Straus, Chairman

Katie Pereny, Secretary