

[DRAFT]

Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
Madison Heights, Michigan
April 02, 2026

A Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting was held on Thursday, April 02, 2026 at 7:30 PM at Council Chambers - City Hall, 300 W. 13 Mile Rd.

PRESENT: Chair Kimble Loranger and members: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

ABSENT: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby,

ZBA 16-26. Excuse member(s).

Motion made by Ms. Covert, Seconded by Ms. Marentette, to excuse Councilwoman Aaron, Ms. Linda Corbett, Mr. Jeffrey Hilliard, and Mr. Clifford Oglesby from tonight's meeting.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

ZBA 17-26. Election of Officers - Chair.

Mr. Loranger called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Board.

Ms. Covert nominated Del Loranger as Chair.

Mr. Loranger accepts the nomination for the Chair position.

Motion made by Ms. Covert, Seconded by Ms. Marentette, to approve Del Loranger as Chair.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

ZBA 18-26. Election of Officers - Vice Chair.

Mr. Loranger called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Board.

Ms. Marentette nominated Martha Covert as Vice Chair.

Ms. Covert accepts the nomination for the Vice Chair position.

Motion made by Ms. Marentette, Seconded by Chair Loranger, to approve Martha Covert as Vice Chair.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

ZBA 19-26. Minutes.

Motion made by Ms. Covert, Seconded by Mr. Sagar, to approve the February 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes as presented.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

ZBA 20-26. Minutes.

Motion made by Ms. Marentette, Seconded by Ms. Covert, to approve the March 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes as presented.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

ZBA 21-26. Case # PZBA 26-02 – Dimensional Variance – 32420 Stephenson Hwy.

City Planner Lonnerstater reviewed the staff report provided in the meeting packet, incorporated herein:

REQUEST

The applicant, Troy Madison Extended Stay, requests a variance from the Madison Heights Zoning Ordinance pertaining to off-street parking location standards. The property is located at 32420 Stephenson Highway (tax parcel # 44-25-02-176-028) and is zoned MUI-2, Mixed-Use Innovation 2. The property is 3.44 acres in size and is located on the east side of Stephenson Highway south of 14 Mile Road. The site is currently improved with a 120-room hotel (Hampton Inn) but has a large grass lawn at the rear. The applicant intends to construct a new 82-room hotel at the rear of the site with shared parking between the two hotels.

A variance is requested from Section 10.01.2.B.4 (Intent and General Parking Requirements – Location) which states:

Mixed-Use Districts (CC and MUI): Off-street parking shall be located in the side or rear yard only, as further restricted in Article 6 (City Center), Section 3.20 (MUI-1), and Section 3.21 (MUI-2). [...].

Concurrent with the new hotel development, the applicant proposes to construct twenty (20) new parking spaces within the front yard area of the Hampton Inn between the building and the road right-of-way. The image below shows an existing aerial view of the property, with the new parking areas shown in the white boxes.

VARIANCE FINDINGS AND CRITERIA

Section 15.06.2 of the Zoning Ordinance grants the Zoning Board of Appeals the power to authorize dimensional variances from building setback requirements, provided that such variances will not be inconsistent with the purpose and intent of such requirements. In granting a variance, the Zoning Boards of Appeals shall make findings that the petitioner has adequately proven the existence of a “practical difficulty”, explicitly with regard to the following criteria:

- A. That strict compliance with area, setbacks, frontage, height, bulk, or density would unreasonably prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose, and would thereby render the conformity unnecessarily burdensome for other than financial reasons; and
- B. That a variance will provide and preserve a substantial property right similar to that possessed by other properties within the same zoning district and in the neighboring area, provided that possible increased financial return shall not of itself be deemed sufficient to warrant a variance; and
- C. That the plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances of the property , such as the shape of the parcel, unique topographic or environmental conditions, or any other physical situation on the land, building or structure deemed by the Zoning Board of Appeals to be extraordinary; and
- D. That the requested variance is the minimum amount necessary to permit reasonable use of the land, building or structure; and
- E. That the authorization of such variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties and will not materially impair the intent and purpose of this Ordinance or the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community; and
- F. That the need for the requested variance is not the result of actions of the property owner or previous property owners (self-created).

In granting any variance, the ZBA may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in conformity with the Ordinance, provided that said conditions are designed to protect natural resources, the health, safety, and welfare and social and economic well-being of the public. Such conditions shall be necessary to meet the intent and purpose of the Ordinance, be related to the standards established in the section for the land use or activity under consideration and be necessary to ensure compliance with those standards.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The intent of the front-yard parking restriction is to ensure that the streetscape isn't dominated by the appearance of parked vehicles. This is especially true along Stephenson Highway which, for the most part, has been historically defined by industrial buildings and warehouses with deep front setbacks and large front yard areas. Over time, front yard parking areas have been established along Stephenson, particularly on properties associated with commercial and lodging uses. For example, the hotels and restaurants along Stephenson to the north of the subject property all feature front-yard parking areas.

While the extent of the proposed front yard parking is limited, efforts should be taken to ensure that proper landscape screening is planted to reduce the visual impact of parked vehicles. Right of way screening and frontage landscaping is proposed on the concept plan. Additional right of way screening will be required adjacent to the new parking space in the southwest corner of the site.

Staff is concerned about the proposed parking space located immediately to the southwest of the canopy. The visibility of a vehicle parked in this space could potentially be obstructed by the canopy column; this space should be removed.

One parking space will need to be removed from the row of sixteen (16) spaces to meet Zoning Ordinance standards.

Practical difficulties relating to a dimensional variance request should generally relate to unique physical constraints on the property, including but not limited to natural features (e.g. wetlands, topography, soil situations), existing structures, or extraordinary parcel shape. Where physical constraints severely limit the ability to operate a use on the property, variances may be warranted.

If a motion to approve the variance is presented, staff recommends several conditions of approval to further limit adverse visual impacts on adjacent properties and the streetscape and meet the spirit of the Zoning Ordinance

Suggested conditions:

1. The Major Site Plan, when submitted, shall be substantially consistent with the conceptual site plan provided within this variance application as it pertains to front yard parking, with the exception of the following required modifications:
 - (a) Right-of-way landscaping shall be provided in front of all new parking areas, including the new space in the southwest corner of the site, in accordance with Section 11.06.2.
 - (b) Frontage landscaping shall be provided in accordance with Section 11.05 for the entire site frontage along Stephenson Highway.
 - (c) No more than fifteen (15) parking spaces shall be provided in an uninterrupted row, in accordance with Section 11.06.1.A
 - (d) The proposed parking space immediately to the southwest of the canopy shall be removed for visibility and safety purposes.
2. Additional front yard parking above and beyond that approved by this variance shall require new application in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

ZBA ACTION

City Planner Lonnerstater explained that the property is zoned MUI-2. The applicant is building a new 82-room hotel at the rear of the site. The ordinance requires one parking space per room, totaling 202 required spaces, and they are proposing 200 spaces. The ordinance requires parking on side or rear yards. The applicant wants relief to add parking rows in the front yard area. Staff suggests conditions: removing one space from the top

row to meet the 15-space limit per row, removing one space near the canopy for visibility, and adding heavy landscaping.

Mark Wright, Architect representing Troy Madison Extended Stay, has no issues with staff recommendations and wants to use the existing drive efficiently.

Mr. Rahul questioned the necessity of parking spaces for a hotel that rarely sells out.

Cameron Kejbou, Manager at Troy Madison Extended Stay, noted that they sell out occasionally in the summer but usually have enough parking spaces.

Assistant City Attorney Burns clarified the board must focus on whether the applicant meets the variance criteria, not whether they "like" the plan.

Chair Loranger opened the public hearing at 7:49 p.m. Seeing no one wished to comment, the public hearing was closed at 7:49 p.m.

Motion made by Ms. Covert, Seconded by Mr. Hussien, **MOVE THAT** the Zoning Board of Appeals APPROVE a variance from Section 10.01.2.B(4) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit parking spaces within a required front yard at 32420 Stephenson Highway. This motion, being made after the required public hearing, is based upon the following findings:

- 1) Section 10.01.2.B(4) limits the placement of new parking spaces to required side and rear yards; and
- 2) Strict compliance with the parking location standards would unreasonably prevent the owner from providing the minimum amount of required parking on site for the proposed use; and
- 3) A variance will provide and preserve a substantial property right similar to that possessed by other properties within the same zoning district and in the neighboring area, provided that possible increased financial return shall not of itself be deemed sufficient to warrant a variance; and
- 4) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances of the property; and
- 5) The requested variance is the minimum amount necessary to permit reasonable development of the land, building or structure; and
- 6) With conditions, the authorization of such variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties and will not materially impair the intent and purpose of this Ordinance or the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Approval is granted with the following conditions designed to ensure compliance with the intent and purpose of the use-specific regulations:

1. The Major Site Plan, when submitted, shall be substantially consistent with the conceptual site plan provided within this variance application as it pertains to front yard parking, with the exception of the following required modifications:
 - (a) Right-of-way landscaping shall be provided in front of all new parking areas, including the new space in the southwest corner of the site, in accordance with Section 11.06.2.
 - (b) Frontage landscaping shall be provided in accordance with Section 11.05 for the entire site frontage along Stephenson Highway.
 - (c) No more than fifteen (15) parking spaces shall be provided in an uninterrupted row, in accordance with Section 11.06.1.A
 - (d) The proposed parking space immediately to the southwest of the canopy shall be removed for visibility and safety purposes.
2. Additional front yard parking above and beyond that approved by this variance shall require new application in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Motion made by Mr. Sagar, to **AMEND** the current motion to only approve the north side parking and keep the south side green. No other member seconded the motion.

Amended motion failed.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette

Voting Nay: Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

ZBA 22-26. Public Comment: For items not listed on agenda.

Seeing no one wished to comment, Chair Loranger opened public comment at 8:00 p.m. and closed the public comment at 8:00 p.m.

ZBA 23-26. Consideration of new meeting time.

Motion made by Ms. Marentette, Seconded by Ms. Covert, to approve changing the start time for the Zoning Board of Appeals meetings to 6:30 PM.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

[DRAFT]

ZBA 24-26. Adjournment.

Motion made by Ms. Covert, Seconded by Mr. Sagar.

Voting Yea: Covert, Hussien, Loranger, Marentette, and Sagar

Absent: Aaron, Corbett, Hilliard, and Oglesby

Motion carried.

There being no further business, Chair Loranger adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.