

Ganges Township Planning Commission
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes for June 23, 2026
Glenn Community Center (Glenn Hall)
6953 114th Ave. Glenn, MI 49416

I. Call to Order - Roll Call

Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call: Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** - Present

Vice Chair: Dale **Pierson** - Present

Secretary: Phil **Badra** - Present

Commissioner: Edward **Gregory** - Present

Commission Trustee: Dick **Hutchins** - Present

Zoning Administrator: Tasha **Smalley** - Present

Recording Secretary: Katie **Wolfe** - Present

McKenna Planner: Kevin **Garcia** - Present

II. Additions to the Agenda and Adoption

Gregory made a motion to approve the agenda. **Badra** seconded the motion. Motion passed.

III. General Public Comments

Kim **Mannion** - 6611 Deer Trl. questioned why the Township allows Special Land Use permits for uses other than cottage industries and short-term rentals within Residential and Residential Agricultural zoning districts. She also asked whether certain uses should instead be directed to Agricultural zoning as farmland is sold. She also noted that she supports the rezoning of WM 1630 LLC.

Brian **Bosgraaf** - 6810 124th Ave. expressed his opposition to Article 14, stating that the current overlay district calls for a lot of limitations that may hinder bluff management. For example, Cottage Home uses a native seed mix when doing bluff restoration,

however, there needs to be irrigation to be successful. He also expressed concern that the Township does not have the resources to develop and enforce the ordinance.

Renee **Bond** - 993 Orchard Ave. stated that she owns lakeshore property where the existing house had to be demolished. She explained that she is considering selling the property and expressed concern that the proposed overlay district could negatively affect its marketability and ability to sell.

Andy **Murch** - 2384 Lakeshore Dr. noted that the Lake Michigan Shore Association submitted a letter offering to form a committee to help with the wording of the new overlay district ordinance. They believe that an ordinance for the bulk protection of the bluff is more appropriate than an overlay district.

Scott **Goldburg** - 1758 Morning Glory Ln. noted the economic impact the Overlay District would have on the township. The Overlay District creates a loss of use, causing an economic obsolescence because the ordinance restricts how property owners can use their properties.

Natasha **Rietveld** - 2380 Lakeshore Dr. shared her hopes that her family can continue to rent her family cottages to continue to build relationships and contribute to the economic well-being of the area.

IV. Correspondence and Upcoming Seminars

Phelps to PC - Re: Overlay district letters from M. **VanderHock** & S. **Hoffman**

Badra to PC - Re: Letter from C. **Bailey**

Phelps to Badra to PC - Re: Letter from J. **Antaya**

DeZwaan to Phelps - Re: PC budget request

Phelps to PC - Re: Lakeshore overlay 2 letters from **Bosgraaf**

Phelps to PC - Re: Letter from Attorney **Schipper** for the **Cottons**

Badra to PC - Re: Letter from **Bila**, attorney client privilege

Badra to PC - Re: Overlay district

Smalley to PC - Re: Overlay district letters from H&A. **Buergenthal**, L. **Kirkaldy**, C. **Landefeld**

Phelps to Smalley to PC - Re: Rezoning request - 1630 Blue Star Hwy from P. **Schmid**, F. **Conklin**, A. **Kronemeyer**, G. **Cotton**, T. **Lewis**, D. **Koster**, G. **Greiner**

V. Public Hearing

1) Fenn Valley South LLC, 6130 122nd Ave. Parcel #0307-012-018-00 Reversion of Conditional Rezoning

Opening of Public Hearing - 7:32 PM

Smalley explained that the parcel had been approved as a conditional rezoning, but the approval period had expired, requiring the property to revert to its previous zoning designation. She noted that the PC was required to hold a public hearing as part of the rezoning reversion process.

Public comments - None

Close of Public Hearing - 7:34 PM

2) WM 1630 LLC, 1630 Blue Star Hwy. Parcel #0307-020-027-00 part of Parcel #0307-020-019-10 Rezoning request from Conditional Rezoning to Commercial

Opening of Public Hearing - 7:35 PM

Vince **Duckworth**, of Cunningham Dalman introduced himself representing WM 1630, LLC, owned by Greg and Meagan **Cotton**. **Duckworth** explained that the property is currently subject to a 2017 conditional rezoning agreement that permits limited commercial use for a microbrewery. He noted that the Township has since amended its ordinance to discontinue future conditional rezoning agreements. He stated that, as a result, he believes the most appropriate course of action is to pursue a standard rezoning request. He explained that the central portion of the property has been developed for the microbrewery and contains existing commercial buildings and infrastructure. The applicant is requesting that the PC recommend approval of a rezoning of the central segment to Commercial, while the remainder of the property would retain its Agricultural zoning designation.

In the future, the Cottons would like to apply to have a Brewpub. According to the Liquor Control Commission, Brewpubs are required to have at least 25% of their gross proceeds in things that are not alcohol-related.

Duckworth believes that furthering a commercial use at the property would be consistent and compatible with the township's goals, policies and future land use under the Master Plan (MP). He explained that the current request is the first step in the process and pertains only to the property's zoning. He noted that the second step would require the applicant to return to the PC for site plan review and approval, at which time the Township would have the opportunity to review the proposed development in greater detail. He added that the property's unique existing development and infrastructure make it well suited for the limited commercial uses envisioned by the applicants.

Greg **Cotton** noted if the building was closer to the road, it would take away from the agricultural corridor that the township is looking for in its MP.

Public comments -

Gregg **Greiner** - 1748 Blue Star Hwy. noted that it is a wonderful use of this existing property.

Carol **Gonzalez** - 1766 Morning Glory Ln. stated that she supports the rezoning, noting that it is great to bring people to the area.

Peter **Schmid** - 1686 68th St. stated that he is a neighboring property owner and expressed his support for the petition. He believes the proposal is a good use of the property.

Kurt **Mathas** - 1297 Fabun Rd. stated that he believes the proposed rezoning will benefit the community as a whole.

David **Koster** - 1540 71st St. stated that he supports the proposal and expressed a preference for spending money within the Township.

Adam **Hogan** - 1373 Wildflower Ln. stated a preference for maintaining agricultural use along Blue Star Hwy. rather than allowing additional building development.

Tanya **Ebert** - 1683 68th St. noted that the proposed plans are similar to a previous business and stated that she does not understand why the proposal is being viewed as an issue.

Lane **Kronemeyer** - 6552 118th Ave. shared support for WM 1630 and voiced concerns about the property being developed if the plans do not get approved.
Chuck **Mannion** - 6611 Deer Trl. shared support for WM 1630.

Close of Public Hearing - 7:54 PM

3) Amend Zoning Ordinance

Opening of Public Hearing - 7:55 PM

Public comments -

G. **Cotton** wondered if the Brewpub hours could be changed in the Zoning Ordinance. He noted that they would like to serve blueberry products, which includes breakfast. He added that breweries, cideries and wineries can all open at 7:00 am, but brewpubs have to wait until 11:30 am.

DeZwaan noted that because the change in hours was not included in the public hearing notice, the PC could not add or consider that item at this time.

Close of Public Hearing - 8:02 PM

VI. Approval of Prior Minutes

Motion made by **Gregory**, seconded by **Badra** to approve the May 26, 2026, Regular Monthly Meeting minutes with corrections. Motion passed.

VII. New Business

1) Fenn Valley South LLC, 6130 122nd Ave. Parcel #0307-012-018-00 Reversion of Conditional Rezoning

Smalley stated that the owner of Fenn Valley did not intend to move forward with the project and therefore was in agreement with the reversion.

DeZwaan made a motion to recommend the reversion of the conditional rezoning to Res/Ag. **Gregory** seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Hutchins - Yes

DeZwaan - Yes

Gregory - Yes

Badra - Yes

Pierson - Yes

Motion passed (5-0)

2) WM 1630 LLC, 1630 Blue Star Hwy. Parcel #0307-020-027-00 part of Parcel #0307-020-019-10 Rezoning request from Conditional Rezoning to Commercial

Gregory asked the applicants what their hopes and aspirations are for the business and what the hours would be. M. **Cotton** replied that their draw is using the farm in their operations and making it a family friendly place for people to go. G. **Cotton** added that hours will depend on how much support they have. The hope is to be open 9am-9pm.

Badra expressed concern about approving the commercial rezoning, noting that it could allow a wider range of commercial uses in the future, particularly if the applicants' current plans do not move forward. M. **Cotton** noted that a majority of uses need approval from the PC, so that could limit possibilities. She continued that the building they would like to use is in the middle of the property which is not ideal for big commercial companies versus building right along Blue Star Hwy.

Pierson wondered if they are maintaining the blueberries. G. **Cotton** replied yes, with help from local farmers. **Pierson** asked about the irrigation. G. **Cotton** replied that the irrigation is there but the pump was sold, so they are working on replacing that.

Pierson noted that technically there is enough commercially zoned land to build large things like a campground or a truck terminal. He continued that the Obbink property is directly across the street and AMECO manufacturing is down the street, which are both commercial properties. Also, the property directly north of

the farm is zoned industrial, so classifying the property as commercial property would not be out of place. The biggest concern is that the **Cotton's** could turn around and sell the property with a new commercially zoned area.

Pierson wondered if they would do their own brewing. **Cotton** said that he doesn't want to do it all himself and he would love to bring others in to help brew.

Badra stated that although future property owners would be required to obtain Special Land Use approval from the PC, if a proposed use meets the applicable ordinance standards, the Commission would have limited grounds to deny the application. He continued that if the property were reverted to its previous zoning configuration, the area currently zoned Commercial would become

Residential/Agricultural, while the area currently zoned Residential/Agricultural along Blue Star would become Commercial. G. **Cotton** clarified that there was a misunderstanding regarding the rezoning request. They are not seeking to rezone any of the property along Blue Star to Commercial, but only the area currently subject to the conditional commercial zoning. He added that, if necessary, they would amend their application to accurately reflect their request.

DeZwaan commented that Ganges Township has sufficient commercial acreage to be developed.

Gregory wondered if there was a mechanism that would allow the proposal to move forward while addressing the concerns raised during the discussion.

DeZwaan responded that there was not, because the Township no longer permits conditional zoning.

Gregory wondered if the portion of the property containing the buildings could be rezoned to Commercial. **DeZwaan** responded that this was not the rezoning request as submitted. **Duckworth** clarified that the applicant is requesting the rezoning of only the area containing the driveway and existing buildings.

Smalley stated that the Township should consult with legal counsel because as part of the contract rezoning, if it's changed, then it reverts back to its initial zoning.

Pierson wondered if the applicant could reapply and specifically spell out their request. **DeZwaan** replied that the lawyer should be contacted about the matter because it starts to sound like conditional rezoning.

DeZwaan made a motion to disapprove the application to rezone because it is not consistent with the MP. There is sufficient commercial in the township already and if this becomes commercial, anything can go in there. **Gregory** seconded the motion.

Badra amended the motion to add that the application is not consistent with the MP because the future land use plan for the commercial district recommends preventing ‘leapfrogging’ of commercial properties in the township. **Hutchins** seconded the amendment. Roll call vote:

Hutchins - Yes

DeZwaan - Yes

Gregory - Yes

Pierson - No

Badra - Yes

Motion passed (4-1)

3) Amend Zoning Ordinance

Gregory feels that it’s time to move on. **DeZwaan** agrees. **Hutchins** noted that it’s very thorough.

In regards to changing the Brewpub hours, **DeZwaan** noted that everything the township is trying to adopt must already be in the notice, and the change of hours was not in the draft.

Pierson confirmed that Article 14 is not included in these amendments. **Garcia** noted that he will make changes to section numbers and page numbers and remove anything that refers to Section 14, including the portion in Section 3.9 Fences.

Badra made a motion to approve the zoning amendments as presented. **Gregory** seconded the motion.

Pierson amended the motion to include: remove all other references to Article 14.

Gregory seconded the amendment. Roll call vote:

Hutchins - Yes

DeZwaan - Yes

Gregory - Yes

Pierson - Yes

Badra - Yes

Motion passed (5-0)

VIII. Old Business – Zoning Ordinance Overlay District Discussion

In regards to the letter received from the Lake Michigan Shore Association, **Badra** wondered if the PC wants to have an advisory committee. **Gregory** stated that he would like to engage in dialogue with members of the community to help develop a well-considered and effective overlay district. **Pierson** also stated that he is happy to meet with a committee.

Badra noted that the PC can have advisory committees, but no decisions can be made by the committee.

DeZwaan asked that the advisory look at **Badra's** suggestion, and stated that anyone interested in applying for the Advisory Committee can send in an application to the Ganges Township Clerk.

It was noted that once the Committee completes its review and discussions, the proposed document will be forwarded to the PC for its recommendation.

IX. Administrative Updates

a. Township Board

Hutchins reported that the Township Board is continuing to work on the Short-Term Rental Ordinance.

b. Zoning Board of Appeals

Pierson had nothing to report.

c. Zoning Administrator

Smalley reported that she received Toby Hutchins site plan, with corrections, so that will be on the next agenda.

X. Future Meeting Dates – July 28th & Aug. 25th

XI. General Public Comments

Chuck **Mannion** encouraged residents to send in their applications to join the advisory committee.

Brian **Bosgraaf** wondered if the overlay district will be on the agenda for July or August.

Hutchins responded that residents are welcome to provide comments during the public comment period, but the committee will need time to complete its work. **Pierson** added that it is the responsibility of the committee members to notify **DeZwaan** when they believe the draft is ready to move forward, at which time it can be placed on the appropriate PC agenda.

L. **Rogge** - 1734 116th Ave wondered how residents will know about the opportunity to sign up for the advisory committee, she wondered if it could be posted on the website.

Lane **Kronemeyer** shared concerns about the 1630 Blue Star Hwy property becoming another subdivision if the applicants cannot proceed with their plans.

XII. Adjournment

DeZwaan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Gregory** seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katelynn Wolfe, Ganges Township Recording Secretary