



CITY OF IONIA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
4:30 PM, Wednesday, August 12, 2026
IONIA CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bailey called the meeting of the Ionia Planning Commission to order at 4:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call revealed a Quorum with Planning Commissioners Logan Bailey, Michael Donaldson, Ryan Gregory, Keturah Kelley, Tim Lee, Jordan Parham, and Judy Swartz present.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairperson Bailey made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Gregory, to amend the agenda to include the Oath of Office for Commissioner Parham and subsequently approve the amended agenda.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

IV. OATH OF OFFICE

Assistant City Manager Bowman administered the oath of office to newly appointed Commissioner Jordan Parham for an unexpired partial term through December 31, 2026, on the Planning Commission.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(V.1.) June 10, 2026 – Regular Meeting

Minutes from the regular meeting of June 10, were reviewed. Planning Commissioner Kelley made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Swartz, to approve the June 10, 2026, meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ASSOCIATED ACTION

None.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

(VIII.1.) Amended Final Site Plan Review for 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Ave.

Assistant City Manager Bowman informed the Commission that an amendment to the previously approved site plan for a gas station, convenience store, coffee shop drive-thru, and car wash located at 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Avenue was submitted for review by the Planning Commission. Bowman explained that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) requested changes to the site plan, based on their review and a recent traffic study. He highlighted that the main changes included modifying the driveway along M-66 to a right-in/right-out only design, removal of two gas pumps, and minor adjustments to onsite traffic flow.

Aly Bazzi of Bazco Holding LLC addressed the Commission, providing information on the project.

The Commission asked several questions of the applicant related to parking, hours of operation, landscaping, and construction timeline.

Planning Consultant Kotrba discussed the zoning requirements and impacts the updated site plan would have on the ordinance's standards.

The following standards were reviewed.

Chapter 1276 – Site Plan Standards of Approval

1. The Planning Commission shall have the authority to limit the number of driveways for a site, to require parking lots on contiguous parcels to be connected, that driveways for contiguous parcels be shared, and that opposite driveways be directly aligned.
2. Landscaping shall be provided and designed in accordance with the City's landscape provisions.
3. All elements of the site plan shall be designed to take into account the site's topography, the size and shape of the lot, the character of adjoining property, and the type and size of buildings. The site shall be developed not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the Zoning Code.
4. The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practical, by removing only those areas of vegetation or making those alterations to the topography that are reasonably necessary to develop the site according to the requirements of the Zoning Code.
5. Areas of natural drainage, such as swales, wetlands, ponds, or swamps, shall be protected and preserved insofar as practical in their natural state to provide areas for natural habitat, preserve drainage patterns and maintain the natural characteristics of the land.
6. The site plan shall provide all dwelling units with reasonable visual and sound privacy. As appropriate, fences, walls, barriers, and landscaping shall be used to accomplish these purposes.
7. All buildings or groups of buildings shall be arranged to permit necessary emergency vehicle access as requested by the Fire Department.
8. In recognition that a sidewalk system along City streets would enhance pedestrian safety and conserve energy through non-motorized transportation opportunities, sidewalks shall be required as determined by the Planning Commission during the site plan review process. Sidewalks, if required, shall be constructed in accordance with the City of Ionia sidewalk standards. Additions or renovations of buildings existing as of the effective date of this Chapter, which require a site plan review, shall be subject to the requirements herein. In determining the need for sidewalks, the following shall be considered:
 - a. The amount of current and future pedestrian traffic by the site.

- b. Whether a sidewalk would enhance the safety of pedestrians currently walking by the site and the safety of future pedestrians.
 - c. The existing and future volume of traffic on the street abutting the site.
 - d. The existence or probability of sidewalks being constructed on adjacent properties in order to create or complete a usable sidewalk system.
 - e. The location of the proposed use.
 - f. The location of pedestrian attractors such as schools, churches, public buildings, and shopping opportunities.
9. The arrangement of public or common ways for vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation shall be connected to existing or planned streets and pedestrian or bicycle pathways in the area. Roads and drives which are part of a current or planned street pattern serving adjacent development shall be of a condition appropriate to the traffic volume and the type of traffic they will carry.
 10. Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that the removal of all surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public stormwater drainage system. Provisions shall be made to accommodate stormwater, prevent erosion, particularly during construction, and prevent dust formation. The use of detention/retention ponds may be required. Surface water on all paved areas shall be collected at intervals so that it will not obstruct the flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic or create puddles in paved areas. The Planning Commission may, at its discretion, require catch basins to contain oil filters or traps to prevent contaminants from being discharged into the natural drainage system.
 11. Exterior lighting shall be arranged so that illumination is deflected away from adjacent properties and so that it does not interfere with the vision of the motorist along adjacent streets. Flashing or intermittent lights shall not be permitted. Excessive lighting of buildings or structures shall be minimized to reduce light pollution. Street lights that conform to the City of Ionia specifications for street lighting shall be installed within the right-of-way along the streets abutting the parcel. The Planning Commission may, at its discretion, require these same street lights to be installed on the parcel at locations that are close to the street in order to maintain a consistent lighting theme along the City streets.
 12. Outside storage areas, including areas for trash storage, shall conform to the regulations contained in Chapter 1060 of these Codified Ordinances.
 13. Maneuvering space for trucks using onsite loading areas shall be provided on-premises and shall not necessitate the use of public rights of way.
 14. Site Plans shall conform with all applicable requirements of County, State, and Federal statutes, and approval may be conditioned on the applicant receiving the necessary County, State, and Federal permits before final site plan approval or any occupancy permits are granted.

The Commission discussed the parking and landscape requirements. Consensus was reached that the proposed site plan, with minor variations from the requirements, was acceptable.

Chairperson Bailey made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Donaldson, to approve the amended site plan for a convenience store, gas station, car wash, and drive-thru establishment at 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Avenue. The motion included waiving the additional trees and parking spaces required by the ordinance, due to a determination that the proposed site plan was adequate. The decision was based on the findings that the site plan was compliant with the Site Plan Approval Standards of Chapter 1276 as detailed and discussed above, subject to the approval by staff of the conditions and outstanding site plan items listed below.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Listed Conditions

1. A land division application shall be submitted to combine the two separate parcels prior to beginning construction.
2. An easement shall be provided to the City related to the existing storm sewer main located on the property.
3. All landscaping must be installed within three months of the site work and construction completion.
4. An approval letter shall be provided to the City from the Michigan Department of Transportation for the site plan and driveway designs.
5. A letter shall be submitted to the City from the Ionia County Drain Commissioner approving site drainage.
6. Receive any other permits or approvals necessary by any local, state, or federal permitting authority.
7. Best management practices for construction site management shall be maintained at all times because of the volume of traffic that uses this intersection and for the health, safety, and welfare of the motorists, pedestrians, and neighboring property owners.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

(IX.1.) Joint Informational Meeting with City Council

Assistant City Manager Bowman announced a planned joint informational meeting between City Council and Planning Commission in place of the next regular Commission meeting on September 9. Bowman indicated that members of Council have requested additional information related to data centers. He mentioned that staff were coordinating an informational presentation from a subject-matter expert with Michigan State University. He also emphasized that the City has not received any applications for a data center.

Commissioners commented that the topic would be beneficial to learn more about and discuss.

Chairperson Bailey made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Kelley, to schedule a joint informational meeting with City Council on data centers for 5:30 PM, Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at Ionia City Hall.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Logan Bailey: Welcomed Commissioner Parham to the Planning Commission.

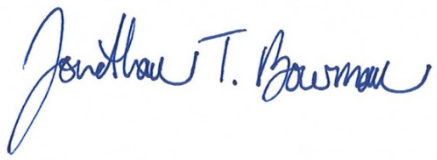
XI. ADJOURNMENT

Planning Commissioner Lee made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Kelley, to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonathan T. Bowman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jonathan" being more prominent than the last name "Bowman".

Jonathan T. Bowman, Recording Secretary
for Judy Swartz, Secretary