

Heather Hanover
Chair

James Eshelman
Vice-Chair

Commissioners

Scott Dzurka, *Mayor*
Eric Hufnagel, *City Commissioner*
Eric Harger
Mark Holden
Todd Krajniak
Brian Mills
Vacant



Chad A. Gamble
City Manager

Mindy J. Seavey
City Clerk

Kristina Kinde
City Treasurer

Michael Homier
City Attorney

Christopher Khorey, AICP
Planning Consultant

PLANNING COMMISSION

November 12, 2025

The St. Johns Planning Commission will hold a regular meeting on November 12, 2025 at 5:30 pm in the County Commission Chambers located at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns, MI. (Please use Cass St. Entrance.)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order (5:30 p.m.)
2. Approval of Agenda (5:31-5:32 p.m.)
3. Approval of Minutes (October 8, 2025, Meeting) (5:32-5:35 p.m.)
4. Public comment for non-agenda items (5:35-5:40 p.m.)
5. Public Hearings: None
6. New Business:
 - a. **Sidewalk Waiver:** Glanbia, 1640 Technical Drive (5:40 – 6:00 p.m.) (ACTION ITEM)
7. Old Business:
 - a. **Zoning Amendment: Outdoor Cafes** (6:00 – 6:20 p.m.) (ACTION ITEM)
8. Committee Site Plan Approvals:
 - a. Glanbia, 1640 Technical Drive (6:20 – 6:30 p.m.)
9. City Commission Update – Mayor Dzurka (6:30 – 6:40 p.m.)
10. Commissioner Comments. (6:40– 6:50 p.m.)
11. Adjournment (6:50 pm) Next Meeting: December 10, 2025

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PLANNING COMMISSION

OCTOBER 8, 2025
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the St. Johns Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Hanover at 5:31 p.m.

Members Present: Heather Hanover, Mark Holden, Eric Hufnagel, Brian Mills, Scott Dzurka, James Eshelman, Todd Krajniak

Members Absent: Eric Harger

Staff Present: Chad Gamble, City Manager; Mindy J. Seavey, City Clerk; Jake VanBoxel, McKenna

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel to approve the agenda as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 10, 2025 MEETING

Motion by Commissioner Eshelman seconded by Commissioner Holden to approve the minutes as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any public comments.

There were no public comments.

9. CITY COMMISSION UPDATE – MAYOR DZURKA:

Mayor Dzurka discussed: the commission took up the plan for outdoor seating. He said they discussed having to post and publish for the ordinance and said there are two pieces to this so they want to wait for the second part so we can publish everything at once.

Commissioner Mills asked if there were any updates for the vacancy on the planning commission.

City Manager Gamble discussed the posting that will be placed on the city's Facebook page.

There was a discussion of whether another city commissioner could temporarily fill the vacancy and that due to 3 commissioners being a quorum that would not be possible.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Amendment to the City's Zoning Map

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the planning commission open the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was opened at 5:37 p.m.

Jake VanBoxel, McKenna, said this is a continuation from the last meeting. Currently, there is a section within the city's zoning map (3 parcels) that doesn't reflect the correct zoning. He said this would be an amendment to the zoning map. He said the parcels are zoned currently, but the map doesn't reflect that.

Chairperson Hanover asked if anyone in the audience has questions or comments.

David Holmberg was present. He said that item is the reason he is present tonight.

Motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Dzurka that the planning commission close the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 5:39 p.m.

B. Rezoning from MC to R-1

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Holden that the planning commission open the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was opened at 5:39 p.m.

Jake VanBoxel, McKenna, said this is a rezoning request for 823 N. Lansing. He said they intend to build a single-family home on this parcel. There is a recommendation that the planning commission recommend this change to the city commission. He discussed: the adjacent properties are residential; it is consistent with the master plan; compatibility; meets the requirements; and R-1 is the most appropriate zoning district.

There was a discussion of:

- Rezoning is needed on some adjacent properties.
 - Page 31 of the packet shows four properties to the north and two to the south are zoned MC but are residential.
 - On page 34, the master plan shows the entire section is planned for residential zoning.
 - Notice to property owners.
 - The public hearing notice for this rezoning tonight only discussed rezoning of 823 N. Lansing Street parcel.
 - The rezoning for other parcels could be brought back at a later meeting.

Chairperson Hanover asked if anyone in the audience has questions or comments.

Kari Dickenson, realtor, was present. She said it just makes sense and when she listed the property she realized the zoning of the property.

Jerome Smith, owner of the property, was present. He discussed the previous owner of the property and there was a house on the property previously, but the house exploded many years ago.

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the planning commission close the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 5:46 p.m.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Amendment to the City's Zoning Map

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Holden that the planning commission recommend to the city commission to amend the Zoning Map.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

B. Rezoning from MC to R-1

There was a discussion of:

- The process of rezoning other parcels.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Todd that the planning commission recommend rezoning to the city commission to rezone from MC to R-1.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

There was a discussion of:

- How the city reaches out to property owners regarding rezoning.
- The zoning map.

C. Revision to Approved Site Plan/Sidewalk Waiver

Jake VanBoxel, McKenna, said these are development standards that are currently in place. He said their request does not meet the waiver criteria. He discussed: the planning commission enforcement of standards as written; if this is waived, there needs to be a discussion moving forward on what can be waived; by not holding development to standards that are in place you open yourself up to future complications; and other developments have adhered to standards.

There was a discussion of:

- Consistency and fairness.
 - Rotary Glass and two storage units have recently installed sidewalks.
- There is no foot traffic in the area.
 - Possibly because there isn't any sidewalk there.
- The need for accessibility for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and parents with strollers.
- Redevelopment at the St. Johns Motel parcel will be taking place at some point.
- The industrial park.
 - Zeeb and Kuntz Drives.
- Look into new ways to develop sidewalks. Some possibilities discussed: a centralized municipal sidewalk program funded by taxes; creating an incentive program (like 0% interest loans); issue bonds; special assessment; or lien on property.
- The sidewalk reimbursement program.
 - New residential and business construction parcels not eligible.
- The city is actively adhering to its own standards by investing in sidewalks during road improvements and through initiatives like the Safe Routes to Schools program.
 - The city has made considerable investments in improving sidewalks in the park.
 - The Safe Routes to Schools program will provide significant resources to fill in sidewalk gaps.
- How many properties still need sidewalks.
 - Provide the sidewalk map for the next meeting.
- It is common for municipalities to require sidewalks in developments.

Motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Holden that the planning commission approve a complete waiver of sidewalks.

YEA: Eshelman, Krajniak, Mills

NAY: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Dzurka

Motion failed.

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the planning commission approve requiring sidewalks along 127 & Zeeb Drive but exempt the sidewalk on Kuntz.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Dzurka

NAY: Krajniak, Mills

Motion carried.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of Outdoor Seating Amendment

Chairperson Hanover discussed the DDA Furniture Aesthetic Guideline. She said the committee is still going over the list and it has not been approved by the DDA board.

City Manager Gamble said we are looking to address this issue in one swoop. He said it will be helpful to have DDA clarification and bring the whole issue back. He said we will work with McKenna and bring it back to the next meeting.

Commissioner Mills left the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Commissioner Hufnagel said he has full faith in the DDA. He said to try to avoid things that are subjective.

8. COMMITTEE SITE PLAN APPROVALS: None

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Eshelman said it was a big win to get cleaned up on Sturgis Street so there is a connected walkway (sidewalk) to the medical complex. He discussed that he doesn't see any sidewalks going in yet near the County buildings on Townsend Road.

Commissioner Holden asked if we are having sidewalks go on both sides of the streets? Is one side enough? He discussed his neighborhood. With the downtown, he asked if it was possibly going to require everyone have the same furniture?

Chairperson Hanover said they didn't want to make everyone have the same furniture.

Commissioner Hufnagel said he is glad we continue to talk about sidewalks, and he feels very strongly about it.

Commissioner Krajniak said with sidewalks he would like to see a conclusion instead of stringing it out.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Eshelman that the Planning Commission adjourn the meeting.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Dzurka, Krajniak

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.



MCKENNA

November 4, 2025

Planning Commission
City of St. Johns
100 E. State St.
St. Johns, MI 48879

Subject: Sidewalk Waiver Application – 1640 Technical Dr.

Dear Commission Members,

We have reviewed the Sidewalk Waiver application, noted above, for 1640 Technical Drive, Parcel # 300-004-300-099-03. The applicant is proposing a new accessory structure that triggered Site Plan Review Committee review. The parcel lies within the I-1 – Industrial – High Performance District. Section 155.201.A of the Zoning Ordinance states that sidewalks are required whenever Site Plan approval of any type is required. The proposed accessory structure required Committee Site Plan Approval.

Despite the address, the site does not have a physical road frontage on Technical Drive due to the St. Johns Big Ditch, therefore, the required sidewalk is only required along the West Walker Road frontage. At the October 24th Site Plan Review Committee meeting, the Site Plan Review Committee granted conditional site plan approval. One condition of this approval is to either install the required sidewalks or receive a waiver from the Planning Commission.

The applicant has requested a waiver from installing the required sidewalk along West Walker Road. Section 155.201.B allows the Planning Commission to waive the required sidewalk if the four listed conditions are met.

Our comments regarding the Sidewalk Waiver application and the four conditions are as follows.

WAIVER CRITERIA

The Planning Commission may waive the requirements of Subsection A based on the following criteria:

1. There is a legal, physical, or environmental impediment that makes the construction of a sidewalk meeting the City's design standards impossible, in the opinion of the Planning Commission. *The applicant lists the physical impediments of the St. Johns Big Ditch and the existing truck entrance. The applicant states the bisecting of the required sidewalk would create a safety hazard to pedestrians using the sidewalk. The bisection of the sidewalk is not an entirely unique situation that would prevent the installation and use of sidewalk, as many sidewalks throughout the city are bisected by driveways and other access drives. Therefore, the Planning Commission should discuss whether the physical impediments are sufficient to grant a waiver for the required sidewalk.*
2. The granting of the waiver would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare and would not create a precedent which would prevent the enforcement of the ordinance for similar conditions or situations in the area in which the property is located. *The granting of the waiver would not necessarily be detrimental to public health. However, granting the waiver could create a precedent that would make future enforcement of the sidewalk requirement difficult. The applicant contends that the sidewalk should not be*



required because there are no sidewalks on the neighboring properties and because the proportion of sidewalk required compared to the addition to the building is out of balance. This reasoning could be applied to a high percentage of situations where sidewalk is required under Section 155.201. If the Planning Commission chooses to grant this waiver, it could result in waiver requests becoming very common and hard to reject.

3. A waiver not limited by a specific duration shall be deemed unspecified in length, but shall not be considered a permanent waiver of sidewalk requirements nor revoke in any way the right of the City to order, install, or assess for sidewalks in accordance with other sections of the Code of Ordinances upon a determination that conditions are necessary for the construction of sidewalk in accordance with public need, health, safety, and general welfare. *The Planning Commission may grant a temporary waiver to defer the installation of a sidewalk at a later date, if desired. However, such action is risky, because of the possibility of future turnover at the City and the institutional memory of the delayed installation being lost, and therefore the sidewalk requirement is never implemented.*
4. In permitting a waiver, conditions of approval may be imposed that are necessary to meet the intent of this subsection or to preserve the public health, safety, and general welfare. *Should the Planning Commission find it appropriate, the Commissioners may grant the requested waiver, however, the granting of the waiver would leave the existing residential uses to the East as disconnected from the sidewalk network. Additionally, the Commissioners may grant a deferred installation agreement, but as mentioned above, this course of action is risky.*

RECOMMENDATION

At this time, based on the above criteria, we do not find sufficient evidence under the criteria listed to recommend approval. The applicant must submit a revised site plan that details the required public sidewalk.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
McKENNA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Khorey".

Christopher Khorey, AICP
Vice President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Walthorn".

Ethan Walthorn,
Assistant Planner



MCKENNA

October 16, 2025

Site Plan Review Committee
100 E. State St.
St. Johns, Michigan 48879

Subject: 1640 Technical Drive Committee Site Plan Review

Dear Committee Members,

As requested, we have reviewed the site plan received for the Glanbia Site located at 1640 Technical Drive, Parcel # 300-004-300-099-03. The applicant is proposing a new detached accessory structure in the Northeast corner of the existing site. The proposed accessory shed is shown as 50 feet by 90 feet, for a total of approximately 4,500 square feet of area and a height of 18 feet and 4 inches. The construction of a non-residential accessory structure greater than 1,000 sq. ft. in area but less than 5,000 sq. ft. in area shall be reviewed by the Site Plan Review Committee. The site is zoned I-1 – Industrial – High Performance Standards. The existing facility is a permitted use that is not proposed to change.

Our comments regarding the criteria for approving the Site Plan follow.

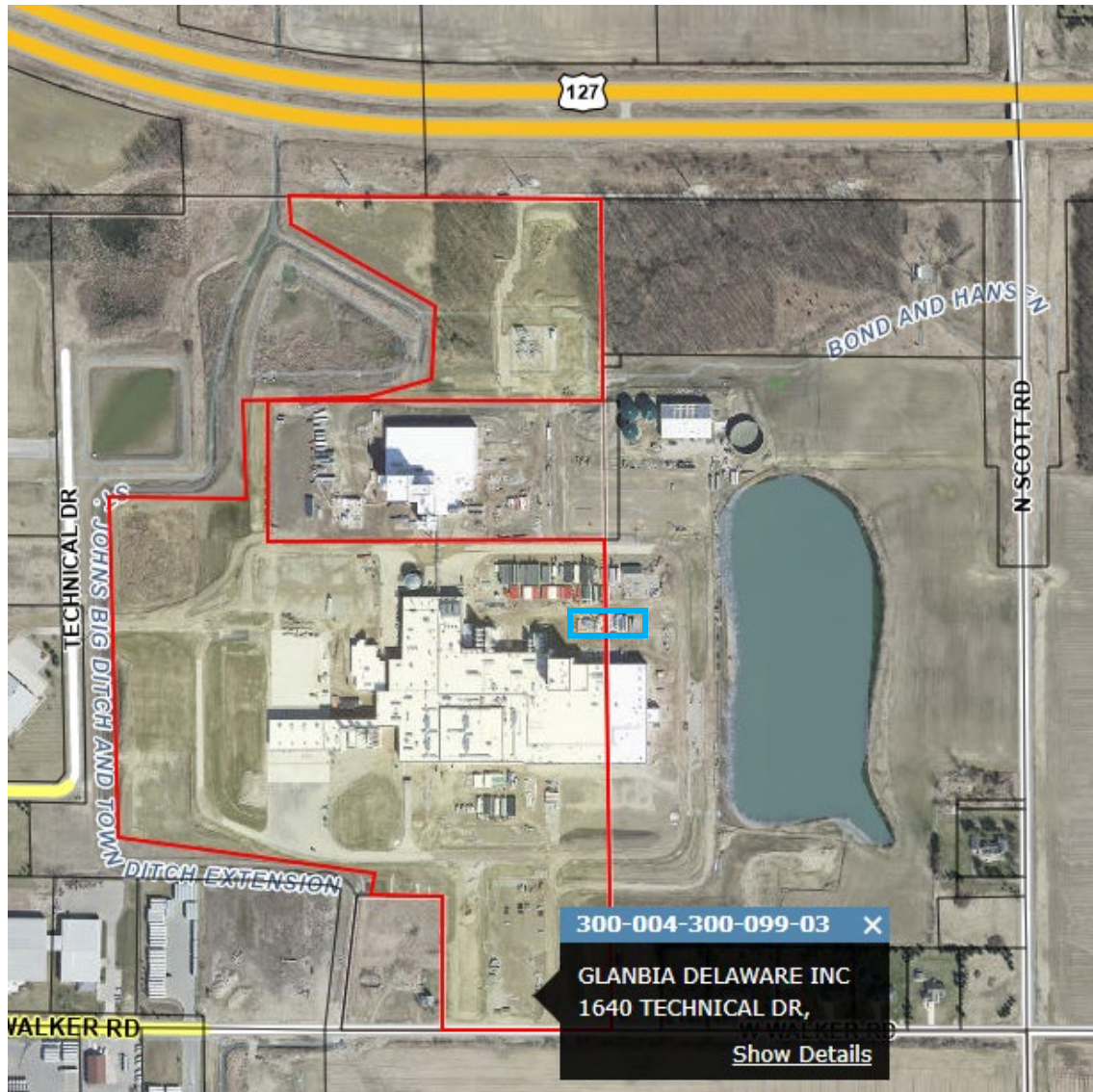
- 1) Dimensional Standards.** Below, we have analyzed the dimensional requirements for the lot. The West lot line shall be considered the front lot line, as the parcel receives access from Technical Drive, along the West side of the parcel.

Standard Type	Ordinance Requirement (I-1)	1640 Technical Dr. Proposed Conditions	Ordinance Compliance
Minimum Front Yard Setback (Technical Drive)	35 ft.	~500 ft.	Yes
Minimum Side Yard Setback (North)	20 ft.	~175 ft.	Yes
Minimum Side Yard Setback (South)	20 ft	~425 ft.	Yes
Minimum Rear Yard Setback (East)	35 ft.	0 ft.	<u>No</u>
Maximum Lot Coverage	70%	~13%	Yes

The East parcel line appears to run directly through the existing building as well as directly through the proposed new accessory structure, as shown below. We recommend the Site Plan Review Committee



requires a lot boundary adjustment to adjust the East lot line to accommodate the existing and proposed structures.



1) Parking, Loading, and Access.

- a. Number of Spaces.** Section 155.342 of the Zoning Ordinance states the parking requirement for storage or warehousing uses is one space per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. The



- proposed expansion totals approximately 4,500 square feet of gross floor area, which triggers a requirement of five (5) additional spaces. The Site Plan does not include any existing or proposed parking, though we estimate it to be around 179 existing spaces based on aerial imagery. The applicant must confirm the number of existing and proposed parking spaces on a revised site plan.
- b. Barrier-Free Spaces.** At least one parking space out of every 25 must be barrier-free (i.e. reserved for people with disabilities). With approximately 179 parking spaces, six (6) barrier-free spaces are required. There appear to be six (6) existing barrier-free spaces on the site plan given, which complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - c. Dimensions.** Section 155.343 outlines states that the minimum space dimensions shall be ten feet wide and 20 feet deep. Dimensions have not been included in the submitted site plan package. The applicant must confirm the dimensions of the typical parking space on site to determine compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - d. Paving and Striping.** Section 155.343 of the Zoning Ordinance requires all parking spaces to be covered with pavement using an asphalt or Portland cement binder. It appears as though all existing parking spaces are paved, which complies with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance
 - e. Loading Zone.** Section 155.344 requires one loading zone for all industrial uses with a gross floor area between 5,000 and 20,000 square feet with an additional loading zone for each additional 20,000 square feet. The site is roughly 358,700 square feet in area, requiring eighteen (18) loading zones. There appear to be approximately 30 loading/unloading zones on the East side of the parcel, which exceeds the minimum number of require loading/unloading zones and therefore complies with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - f. Sidewalks.** There are no sidewalks existing or proposed on the site. Section 155.201 of the Zoning Ordinance requires sidewalks to be installed along all road frontages. The site itself directly abuts Walker Road on the South side of the parcel. The applicant must provide the required sidewalks along Walker Road on a revised site plan or receive a waiver from the Planning Commission.

2) Utilities and Drainage

- a. Storm Water Runoff.** The applicant must work with the Department of Public Services to determine the impacts of the development on the City Stormwater system, and any additional detention that must occur on-site.
- 3) Landscaping.** No landscaping has been submitted for the site. Landscaping meeting the requirements of the Ordinance is required for all improvements requiring site plan review, as listed in Sections 155.295-155.304. Section 155.296 allows the approving to grant an exception from landscaping requirements due to existing conditions on the site. If appropriate, the Site Plan Review Committee may grant an exemption to some or all of the landscaping requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Considering the Site Plan



Review Committee granted a waiver for landscaping for the adjacent partner site at Proliant Dairy and the same conditions apply, we recommend the Site Plan Review Committee grant a landscape waiver for all landscaping across the site, as there has not been any landscaping on the site due to health and safety concerns.

- a. **Buffer Zones.** Section 155.297 lists the minimum buffer zones required to screen against adjacent land uses. Industrial uses that are adjacent to other industrial uses are not required to install any buffer zones to screen from adjacent uses, however the industrial use is directly across Walker Road from a large R-1 parcel. The applicant is required to provide a buffer zone along the South lot line where it directly abuts the R-1 zone.
 - b. **Street Frontage Landscaping.** Along the right-of-way, 1 tree is required for every 30 feet of frontage. The front lot line abuts Walker Road and is measured at approximately 550 feet wide. This triggers a requirement of approximately 18 trees required along the South lot line. The applicant must include these required street trees on a revised landscape plan.
 - c. **Parking Lot Landscaping.** Section 155.298 of the Zoning Ordinance states that developments with more than 16 parking spaces must include parking lot islands with one (1) canopy tree per eight (8) spaces. With approximately 179 parking spaces, twenty-two (22) canopy trees must be included within parking lot islands. The current site plan does not depict any canopy trees within parking lot Islands. The applicant must submit a landscape plan that meets the requirements of Section 155.298 to comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - d. **Landscaping Adjacent to Buildings.** Ornamental landscaping is required along the perimeter of buildings by Section 155.302. For industrial buildings like the one proposed, the landscape area must be 5% of the size of the building. Including the new addition, that would total approximately 18,160 square feet. There does not appear to be any landscaping present on the site. The applicant must include the required landscaping next to principal structures on a submitted landscape plan.
- 2) **Trash Receptacles.** There do not appear to be any trash receptacles shown on the submitted site plan. The applicant should confirm the location of all trash receptacles to meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- 3) **Lighting.** No photometric plan has been submitted. Section 155.191 of the Zoning Ordinance lists the requirements of interior and exterior lighting. Light levels crossing onto adjacent residential uses shall not exceed 0.1 footcandles. Light levels crossing onto other adjacent properties shall not exceed 1.0 footcandles. The applicant must submit a photometric plan detailing the illumination levels of all exterior lighting at the property lines to meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION

At this time, we recommend the Site Plan Review Committee grant a waiver for all of the required landscaping for the lot, due to health and safety concerns caused by potential diseases carried via birds that would be attracted to additional landscaping. Following the granting of this waiver, we recommend the Committee Members consider the site plan as **APPROVED** with the following conditions to be met prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy:



1. The applicant either combines or adjusts the lot boundary line on the East side of the parcel to accommodate the existing and proposed buildings.
2. The applicant must submit a revised site plan package that addresses the parking requirements for the lot.
 - a. The revised site plan must confirm the number and location of all existing and proposed parking spaces.
 - b. The applicant must confirm the size of the typical parking space on site to confirm compliance with the Ordinance.
 - c. The applicant must either include the required sidewalks along Walker Road or receive a waiver from the Planning Commission regarding sidewalks.
3. The applicant must coordinate with the Department of Public Services regarding utility impacts, particularly stormwater.
4. The applicant must submit a revised site plan that includes the location and screening information for all existing and proposed trash receptacles on site to determine compliance with the standards of the Zoning Ordinance.
5. The applicant provides a photometric plan that details the illumination levels of all exterior lighting on site to determine compliance with illumination standards.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
McKENNA

Christopher Khorey, AICP
Vice President

Ethan Walthorn,
Assistant Planner



Clinton County Michigan

PAYMENT:

Permit Fee: \$ 75

- ☐ Check #: _____
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Credit/Debit Card (+ 3%)

ZONING (LAND USE) APPLICATION

Location Information:

Site Address: 1640 Technical Dr City: St. Johns Zip Code: 48879

Parcel ID: 300-004-300-099-03 Township: St. Johns

Landowner: MWC

Email: nlaws@shambaugh.com Phone: 260.361.1019

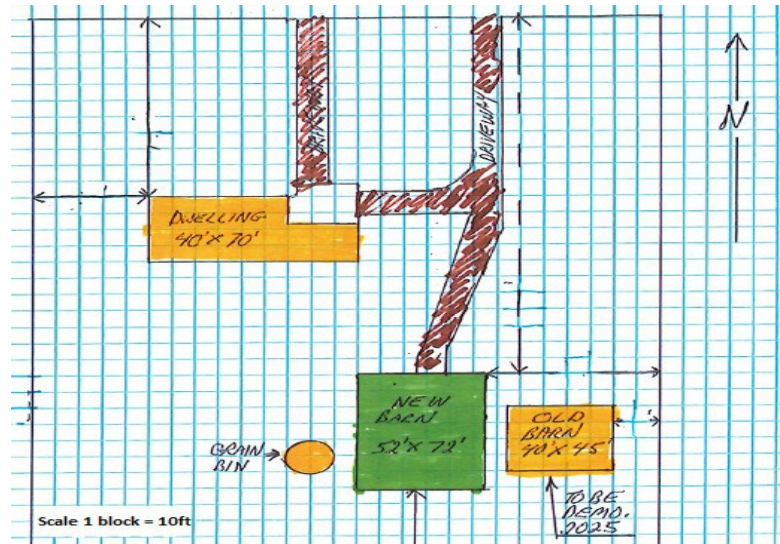
Project Description: Exterior shed for storage of misc. yard equipment, tools, & material.

Lot Size: 4,784sf acres Structure Width: 50' ft Structure Length: 90' ft Wall Height: 18'-4" ft

Plot Plan: ONE COPY – example below. Refer to Clinton County Zoning Ordinance for setback requirements.

Plot Plan Checklist (must include all items):

- ☐ Adjacent Roads
- ☐ All setbacks
- ☐ Location & size of all existing buildings & proposed building(s)
- ☐ North Indicator
- ☐ Waterbodies/other significant landmarks



Minimum Setback Ordinance Key:

Principal Structure: *Section 3.1*

Detached Accessory Structure: *Section 4.1*

Applicant Agreement:

IMPORTANT: *I (the undersigned) certify that the information provided on this application and plot plan is accurate. I will cooperate with the Planning and Zoning Staff, including allowing access to all properties and structures herein.*

☒ Applicant Signature: _____ Date: 8/13/25

(Print Name) Nate Laws

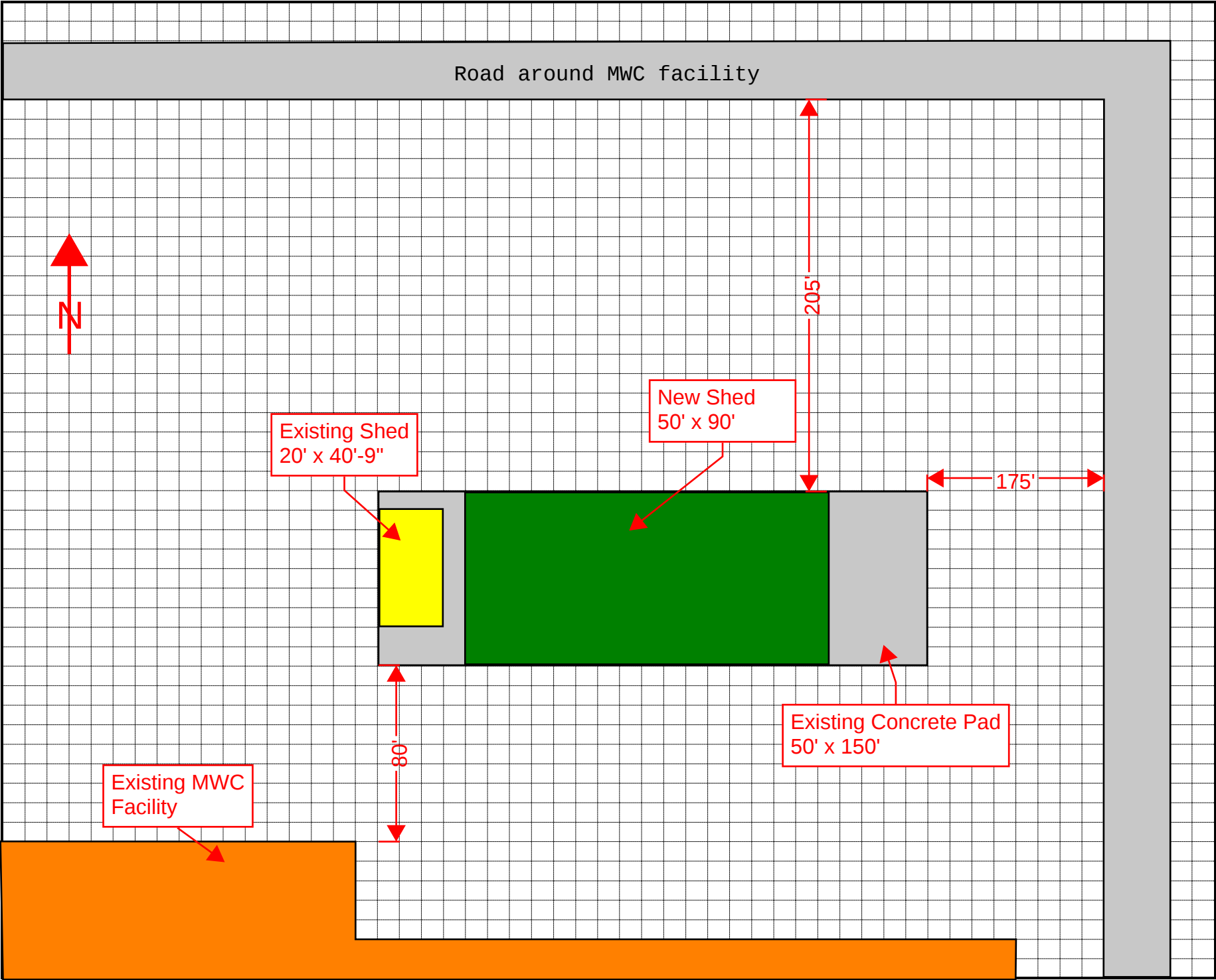
OFFICE REVIEW:

By: _____ Date: _____ ☐ Approved ☐ Denied

Stipulations / Reasoning: _____

PLEASE EMAIL ALL APPLICATIONS AND PLANS TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT.

Clinton County Planning and Zoning Department
100 East State Street, Suite 1300
St. Johns, Michigan 48879
(989) 224-6591 • planningandzoning@clinton-county.org



RE: MWC Building Permit Sidewalk Waiver - RFI Prior to Planning Commission Meeting

From Schultz, Chris - GNMH <cschultz@glanbia.com>

Date Fri 10/31/2025 9:50 AM

To Ethan Walthorn <ewalthorn@mcka.com>

Cc Brian Guyer <bguyer@shambaugh.com>; EXT_nlaws <nlaws@shambaugh.com>; Christopher Khorey <CKhorey@mcka.com>

Ethan,

Below is the rationale for an exemption to installing a sidewalk on the walker road frontage at MWC as part of our new outbuilding construction.

There are two physical impediments that would bisect the new sidewalk. One is the St. Johns big ditch. The second is our truck entrance. Having our truck entrance bisect the frontage also introduces a health and safety issue. We have over 200 trucks going in and out of the entrance every day as it is an entrance to an active factory and introducing a sidewalk may pose a safety hazard to those using it.

Second is that no residential or industrial parcel nearby has a sidewalk. Martin Brower, which also has lots of truck enter and exit, does not have a sidewalk at their truck entrance for what I would imagine is the same reason.

I do not believe the granting of this waiver would be a detriment to public health and safety, not should it be a detriment to the general welfare.

If anything further is needed on this point please let me know and I will get that over to you.

Thanks!

Chris

Chris Schultz | Project Engineer



1640 Technical Dr, St. John MI 48879

Work Cell: 989-209-5435

**Better nutrition,
built around you.**



From: Ethan Walthorn <ewalthorn@mcka.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 4:29 PM

To: Schultz, Chris - GNMH <cschultz@glanbia.com>

Cc: Brian Guyer <bguyer@shambaugh.com>; EXT_nlaws <nlaws@shambaugh.com>; Eric Hufnagel <ehufnagel@stjohnsmi.gov>; Christopher Khorey <CKhorey@mcka.com>

Subject: RE: MWC Building Permit Sidewalk Waiver - RFI Prior to Planning Commission Meeting

WARNING: This message originated from outside the Glanbia network, please use caution when accessing content and responding. Do **NOT** open attachments or click on links unless you can verify the source of this email. Report any suspicious emails to **Global Service Desk**

https://link.edgepilot.com/s/35faabc4/aWpK8yzLm0iwXJbkjaTH_Q?u=http://servicedesk/

Good afternoon Chris,

Eric forwarded your inquiry about the sidewalk waiver to me, as I am able to assist in answering your questions about how to apply for the waiver. I do not believe there is a formal form for you to fill out for the waiver as of yet, as the City is currently in the process of creating one. Since this is a waiver as part of your Site Plan Review Committee application, we can just add the sidewalk waiver as an agenda item for the November 12th Planning Commission meeting. We will draft a sidewalk waiver review for the Planning Commissioners that includes a recommendation and provide that to the Commissioners when the meeting packet goes out one week prior to the meeting.

For the waiver submission, all that would need to be submitted is a project narrative that explains why you feel the waiver is necessary. This narrative should address the following discussion points included within Section 155.201 the Zoning Ordinance:

1. There is a legal, physical, or environmental impediment that makes the construction of a sidewalk meeting the city's design standards impossible, in the opinion of the Planning Commission.
2. The granting of the waiver would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare and would not create a precedent which would prevent the enforcement of this chapter for similar conditions or situations in the area in which the property is located.
3. A waiver not limited by a specific duration shall be deemed unspecified in length, but shall not be considered a permanent waiver of sidewalk requirements nor revoke in any way the right of the city to order, install, or assess for sidewalks in accordance with other sections of the Code of Ordinances upon a determination that conditions are necessary for the construction of sidewalk in accordance with public need, health, safety, and general welfare.

4. In permitting a waiver, conditions of approval may be imposed that are necessary to meet the intent of this division or to preserve the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Once these points are addressed, you can submit that project narrative directly to us here at McKenna and we will draft the review letter in preparation for the meeting. Although not required, it is recommended to appear at the Planning Commission meeting to explain your side of the story to help improve the odds of approving the waiver. Please let us know if you have any further questions or concerns about the waiver process and we would be happy to help!

Best,

Ethan Walthorn

—

Assistant Planner

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Memorandum

TO: St. Johns Planning Commission
FROM: Jacob VanBoxel, MSA, Principal Planner
Ethan Walthorn, Assistant Planner
SUBJECT: **Sidewalk Cafes & Outdoor Seating Areas:
Remove Special Land Use and Develop New Regulations**
DATE: November 3, 2025

Background:

Over the past few months, the Planning Commission has held discussions pertaining to removing the Special Land Use requirement along with some suggestions related to new regulations for the ordinance. These included:

- DDA's associated with esthetics and looks.
- An administrative process.
- Social districts.
- 5 rules in sidewalk café ordinance.
- If administrative approval, an appeal can be taken to the ZBA.
- Clarify definitions: café, dining accessories, accessory buildings: pergola or gazebo; how close to property line, annual permit or permanent.
- Fences.
- Private property as opposed to public sidewalk.
 - Clarify rules on private property.

Originally, the intent was to conduct these changes in a two-step process. First removing the Special Land Use requirement, then adopting new regulations.

At the September 22, 2025 meeting, the City Commission took no action on the proposed amendment, opting to send the draft back to the Planning Commission for continued development. This decision was made to prevent the City from spending on multiple publications. The City Commission agrees with removing the Special Land Use requirement and intends to adopt the ordinance when it is brought back before the board as a final draft.

New Regulations for the Sidewalk Cafes Ordinance:

At the October 8, 2025 Planning Commission meeting, members of the Commission briefly discussed new regulations along with reviewing the suggestions provided by the DDA.

On October 29th, the City Manager and planning consultants updated the draft amendment based on those conversations.

Revisions will continue to be made until the Planning Commission can agree that the draft text is sufficient and ready for review at a public hearing.



Below is the proposed text of new regulations for consideration and discussion:

§ 155.446 SIDEWALK CAFÉ & OUTDOOR SEATING AREAS.

Sidewalk cafes and outdoor seating areas are permitted in the GC and CBD Districts, provided:

- (A) The café will be designed so as not to block pedestrian traffic or access to the restaurant or adjacent businesses.
 - a. A minimum of seven (7) feet of sidewalk along the curb and leading to the entrance to the establishment must be maintained free of tables and other encumbrances.
- (B) Outdoor speakers are prohibited in the CBD District.
- (C) Outdoor seating areas shall be operated only during normal operation hours of the establishment. In no case shall an outdoor seating area operate between the hours of 11 PM and 7 AM.
- (D) The café operator shall be responsible for maintaining the area trash free.
- (E) To avoid wind blown trash, the pre-setting of tables with napkins, glasses or utensils is prohibited.
- (F) Outdoor seating areas shall be required to be enclosed in instances where there is waitstaff or alcohol service. For the purpose of this Section, an enclosure is a decorative wood or metal railing or other decorative removable physical delineation approved by the Planning Commission.
- (G) All roofs and other overhead structures must be shown on the site plan. A previously approved outdoor cafe may add a roof, subject to Zoning Administrator approval.
- (H) Tables, chairs, planters, trash receptacles, and other elements of street furniture shall be compatible with the architectural character of the adjacent buildings. If table umbrellas will be used, they should complement building colors. During nonbusiness hours, all tables, chairs, umbrellas and other furniture and fixtures must be stored inside the building or properly secured within the enclosure. Furniture placement is approved from April 1 through November 30th. All furniture must be removed from December 1 through March 31st.
 - a. A site plan shall specify the plans for layout of tables, chairs, and equipment during the months when the outdoor seating is in use.
- (I) Outdoor seating shall be subject to applicable City, County and State requirements.
- (J) Outdoor cafes on public property must meet the following standards:
 - a. The applicant will provide evidence of primary comprehensive general liability insurance by a Michigan authorized insurance carrier in an amount not less than \$500,000.00 naming the City of St. Johns as co-insured if any City property is involved covering any and all claims arising by virtue of the use and/or activity as well as provide evidence of prepaid annual premium to the City of St. Johns timely every year. Failure to do so will automatically terminate special use approval of such use or activity if it involves the use of City property.
 - b. In addition, the applicant must receive a Café Permit from the Zoning Administrator to use the space in question.
 - c. In order to use any part of a state trunk line right-of-way, the applicant must receive permission from MDOT.
- (K) Approval of an outdoor cafe may be revoked by the City if the condition(s) of approval or other ordinance requirements have not been met or that use poses a nuisance to the surrounding properties.