



Andy Schor
Mayor

LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
February 3, 2026 - 6:30 p.m.
Neighborhood Empowerment Center
600 W Maple Street, Lansing, MI

MINUTES – *Approved 3/3/2026*

1. OPENING SESSION

Mr. Klont called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

- a. Present: Katie Alexander, Tony Cox (arrived at 6:36), Monte Jackson, Tim Klont, Spencer Lippert, Shane Muchmore (arrived at 6:35)
- b. Absent: Ted O’Dell (excused), John Ruge (excused)
- c. Staff: Sue Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator; Andy Fedewa, Planner

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

3. COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS & ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. SLU-3-2026, 5200 S Cedar Street, Special Land Use Permit for a Place of Worship

Ms. Stachowiak presented the request from the Islamic Society of Greater Lansing for a special land use permit to establish a place of worship in one of the suites of the shopping plaza at 5200 S Cedar St. Historically, there has been concern about places of worship affecting the tax base and economic vitality when locating in commercial areas. The proposed place of worship would occupy a suite that was most recently used as an event center, or ‘place of assembly’, surrounded by other commercial suites and detached commercial buildings. Because of the adjacent level of activity, the place of worship is not expected to impact the surrounding area. Since the place of worship would occupy an existing suite, no building or property alterations are proposed. There are large parking lots at the rear and front of the building and there appears to be more than enough spaces to accommodate the place of worship weather services/activities are once a week or seven days a week.

Thasin Sardar, representative for the applicant, spoke on the Islamic Society of Greater Lansing’s current operations within their building in East Lansing. Mr. Sardar spoke on the growth of the Muslim community in the Lansing area and the opportunity to address another population need with extra space and major bus route access in the city of Lansing. Mr. Sardar stated that they anticipate occupancy of up to 300 people based on historic use of the suite. They would use the building five times a day, every day of the week with fluctuating attendance.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the Fire Marshal determines building occupancy outside of any zoning considerations.

Mr. Klont opened the public hearing.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Mr. Klont closed the public hearing.

Mr. Cox made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to recommend approval of SLU-3-2026, 5200 S Cedar Street, Special Land Use Permit for a Place of Worship. On a voice vote the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

B. Z-2-2026, 332 Townsend Street, Rezoning from “DT-3” Downtown Core to “R-AR” Residential Adaptive Reuse.

Ms. Stachowiak presented the request from the Boji Group on behalf of ‘The Nest’ to rezone 332 Townsend St. from “DT-3” to “R-AR” and for a Special Land Use permit for a ‘Sheltered Care Facility’ in the R-AR district. The existing building on site is vacant and was built for offices. The purpose of the R-AR district is to promote appropriate reuse or redevelopment of former institutional sites that is compatible in scale and intensity with the previous use or character of the area. With the decrease in office use following the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a surplus of buildings available for reuse. There are no proposed changes to the exterior of the site and The Nest will renovate the interior office space into shelter space. The site is largely surrounded by other office users and large parking lots, though there is some residential including an apartment building across the street and the City Rescue Mission which was approved for their new location a year ago. Ms. Stachowiak stated that the downtown core should be reserved for high intensity commercial, retail, and residential uses, and this location is outside of that core along a major bus route, and within walking distance of necessary services and resources.

Shelbi Frayer, president and CEO of Holy Cross Services (HCS), spoke on the recent decision to spin off shelter operations from other Holy Cross Services operations into a new standalone organization, The Nest. HCS has long occupied a five-story building on N Larch St. in the Stadium District. They can only functionally use two stories of the building which is vastly under-utilized but has outsized maintenance and operating costs. This proposal will allow The Nest to move into a newer building suiting their needs after necessary renovations. Ms. Frayer stated that the setup of the building will allow them to create two wings, one for veterans and one for families. Each wing will be accessible by key access to maintain proper security. A day center will be located in the basement garden level of the building, utilizing the existing assembly space, so that the population they serve have some place to go during the day.

Ms. Alexander asked the capacity of the building. Ms. Frayer answered they will have beds for 56 persons. There will be 26 veterans, an increase of four from current capacity, and approximately one dozen families.

Mr. Muchmore asked for a statement concerning the flow of unhoused persons and a possible concentration of facilities along Kalamazoo St. Ms. Frayer stated that there are safety concerns about people traveling so far from their existing site, to various parts of downtown for transit and services and resources. By relocating, the people they serve will be closer to the bus station and other services and resources that they need. Relocating the day center, which is open to everyone in addition to the people they serve, establishes a place for many unhoused individuals to go, likely reducing the number of people travelling around the city.

Mr. Klont asked if The Nest uses the Homeless Management Information System. Ms. Frayer confirmed that they do.

Ms. Alexander asked for a description of other allowable land uses under the R-AR district. Ms. Stachowiak stated that the district mainly allows for residential and office uses. There is a density cap based on lot sizes for new developments.

Mr. Muchmore asked if HCS has a relationship with the Lansing Police Department and asked if concentrating shelter care facilities may effect ongoing developments downtown. Ms. Frayer confirmed that they have a relationship with the police department. Ms. Stachowiak stated that this is actually an advantageous location because it is outside the Downtown core corridor of Washington Ave., and surrounded by institutional users like the State of Michigan, the Ingham County Court and the City of Lansing, which are unlikely to redevelop their parking lots anytime soon.

Mr. Lippert asked what public outreach was done. Staff confirmed that notices were sent out to property owners and occupants within 500' feet of the property, following internal precedent for other sheltered care facilities, and did not receive responses in opposition, in contrast to another sheltered care facility request two years ago. Mr. Lippert stated that the lack of public comment may indicate that some fears about the homeless population have been unfounded.

Mr. Jackson asked about site security. Ms. Frayer answered that they have trained staff and secure access points, as well as internal security features like the separated wings.

Mr. Cox asked if The Nest has a code of conduct and if the organization will have programs to move people out of homelessness. Ms. Frayer stated they do have a code of conduct, and some of the grants they utilize come with conditions, such as a drug-free environment. Each resident has a case management profile depending on their individual needs. A plan is formulated to fulfill needs and achieve goals to move out of the shelter. The Nest requires behavior contracts and has a three-strike policy.

Mr. Muchmore asked if their long-term funding is threatened by federal funds or the lack thereof. Ms. Frayer stated that they are operating within a three-year cycle and do not foresee any issues within the next two years. Mr. Klont informed the Commission that the federal budget was approved that day with a slight increase to some of the funds The Nest may utilize.

Mr. Klont opened the public hearing for both Z-2-2026 and SLU-2-2026.

Kathy Conklin, stated that Cooley Law School may have services and may offer pro bono work to the residents. Ms. Conklin spoke on her concerns about over-concentration of sheltered care facilities along Kalamazoo St. and general safety.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Klont closed the public hearing for both Z-2-2026 and SLU-2-2026.

Ms. Alexander made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cox, to recommend approval of Z-2-2026, 332 Townsend St., Rezoning from “DT-3” Downtown Core to “R-AR” Residential Adaptive Reuse.

On a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

- C. **SLU-2-2026, 332 Townsend Street, Special Land Use Permit for a “Sheltered Care Facility” in the “R-AR” district.**

Mr. Cox made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to recommend approval of SLU-2-2026, 332 Townsend St., Special Land Use Permit for a “Sheltered Care Facility” in the “R-AR” district.

On a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

- 5. **COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE – None**

- 6. **RECESS – Not taken**

- 7. **BUSINESS**

- A. **Consent Items**

- (1) **Minutes for approval: January 6, 2026**
The minutes from the January 6, 2026, Planning Commission meeting were approved without objection.

- B. **Old Business – None**

- C. **New Business**

- (1) **Act-3-2026, 300 block E Kalamazoo St. City of Lansing-State of Michigan Easements’;**

Mr. Fedewa presented the request from the Lansing Public Service Department to establish three easements for use of City land for the State of Michigan and one easement for use of State land for the City. The State easements would formally recognize building infrastructure that was inadvertently built across vacant city property for the Grand Tower (235 S Grand Ave.) and the Michigan Vital Records Office (307 E Kalamazoo St.). The City easement would allow the City to maintain a portion of the River Trail extending along the east property line of 307 E Kalamazoo St.

Each easement agreement would allow the parties to add, access, and maintain their respective infrastructure. Each party would be responsible for all maintenance of their respective improvements. No fees will be charged for either agreement. Staff recommends approval of the request as proposed.

Ms. Alexander made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cox to approve Act-3-2026, 300 block E Kalamazoo St., City of Lansing – State of Michigan easements.
On a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

- 8. **REPORT FROM PLANNING & ZONING OFFICE – None**

- 9. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – None**

- 10. **COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS – None**

- 11. **PENDING ITEMS: FUTURE ACTION REQUIRED – None**

- 12. **ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**