

City Of Hart

407 S. State St

Hart, Mi 49420

Planning Commission

Thursday, December 4th, 2025

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Clark, Jim Cunningham, Diane LaPorte, Andrew Mullen, and Betty Root

ABSENT: Cynthia Fout

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Nichole Kleiner, City Clerk – Karla Swihart, Dave Hansen, and Jessica Molengraff

- D. LaPorte called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- A. Mullen motioned to approve the agenda and was supported by B. Root
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- L. Clark motioned to approve the minutes from November 6th, 2025 and was supported by J. Cunningham
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

- NONE

PUBLIC HEARING:

- None

ACTION ITEMS:

- Consider Board Member Application – Jim Evans
 - A. Mullen motioned to recommend the appointment of Jim Evans to City Council for approval, and was supported by L. Clark
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

- Request for Interpretation – Dog Boarding/Grooming Use in the B-2 District (3730 W Polk Rd) The City has received an inquiry from property owner Dave Hansen regarding the proposed conversion of 3730 W Polk Rd (formerly a laundromat/car wash) to dog grooming and potential dog boarding use. Before advising the applicant on next steps, request from the Planning Commission an interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance as it applies to this request.

Section 1250.02 (Permitted Uses in the B-2 General Business District) also does not list animal boarding, kennels, dog daycare, or similar animal-related uses among allowable uses.

Section 1250.03 (Special Land Uses in the B-2 District) also does not include dog boarding, kennels, or pet-related service establishments.

Because the ordinance allows only those uses explicitly listed, and “dog boarding” or “kennels” are not identified as either permitted or special land uses in the B-2 district, staff’s preliminary interpretation is that dog boarding is not currently allowed in this district.

There are two possible paths for the application:

1. Zoning Board of Appeals Interpretation

The ZBA could be asked to interpret Section 1249.02(b), which permits “personal service establishments” within a completely enclosed building, such as repair shops, tailor shops, beauty parlors, decorators, photographers, and permanent cosmetic services.

Dog grooming may be considered similar in nature to other personal services. If the ZBA determines that grooming fits within this category, the use could potentially be permitted subject to conditions comparable to those placed on similar personal service uses.

This interpretation process would apply to grooming only. It is less likely that dog boarding would fit under this section.

2. Zoning Text Amendment

The Planning Commission could consider a zoning text amendment to add “dog boarding,” “animal kennels,” or similar uses as a special land use in the B-2 district. This would require a public hearing, Planning Commission recommendation, and City Council approval.

Guidance Requested

I am requesting the Planning Commission’s directions on how to proceed so staff may advise the applicant appropriately.

Please advise on:

- Whether the Commission believes dog grooming could reasonably fit under the “personal service establishment” category with conditions;
- Whether dog boarding should be considered through a zoning text amendment process; and
- Any additional standards or concerns the Commission would like addressed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Reschedule January Planning Commission Meeting (City hall is closed on Jan 1st, 2026.)
The new scheduled date is January 8th, 2026
- Planning Commission Training Opportunities
CM Kleiner- based upon the responses received, will sign up for - environmental planning, Housing Supply, and the last basic planning and zoning essentials. Will open the training to all boards and commissions to join.
- Act 425 Agreement – Status of Transferred Parcels Upon Agreement Expiration and Recommended Zoning Actions
The Act 425 Agreement, executed March 15, 1996, conditionally transferred certain territory from Hart Township to the City for a term of 30 years for the purpose of providing water, sewer, and other governmental services. Under Article IV, Section 4.1, the term of the Agreement is 30 years. Under Section 4.3, the Agreement provides that upon termination after the initial 30-year term, the Transferred Area will automatically, unconditionally, and for all purposes be within the sole, complete, and permanent jurisdiction of the City.

Upon expiration of the Agreement:

- All parcels identified in the Transferred Area become fully and permanently part of the City’s jurisdiction.
- The temporary governance structure created under the Agreement ends.
- Zoning and land use authority transitions entirely to the City, under the City’s zoning ordinance, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

Recommendation for Updating Zoning and the Zoning Map

Once the parcels are fully incorporated into the City, the Planning Commission will need to ensure they are assigned an appropriate City zoning classification and shown correctly on the official zoning map. To accomplish this, I recommend the following process:

1. Review Existing Township Zoning Classifications
Compile the current Hart Township zoning designations for all parcels in the Transferred Area so the Commission understands how the properties are presently regulated.
2. Evaluate Appropriate City Zoning Districts
Compare the existing uses, parcel configurations, utilities, and surrounding development patterns with the City’s zoning districts to determine which City classifications best align with the Master Plan and land use goals.
3. Prepare a Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning) Proposal
Because these parcels are not currently assigned to a City zoning district, a rezoning is required. This should take the form of a comprehensive zoning map amendment affecting all parcels in the Transferred Area.
4. Conduct a Public Hearing

As required by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed zoning map amendment, followed by a recommendation to City Council

5. City Council Adoption

City Council will consider and act on the Planning Commission's recommendation to formally amend the zoning map and assign zoning districts to the parcels.

6. Update the Official Zoning Map

Once adopted, update the City's official zoning map and make it available on the City's website and in print.

These steps will ensure a smooth transition from Township zoning to City zoning and will provide clarity to property owners, developers, and the public regarding future land use regulation in the area.

Please let me know if the Commission would like staff to prepare a draft zoning map amendment or provide parcel-by-parcel zoning information for preliminary review.

OTHER BUSINESS and COMMUNICATION FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS:

- Hope everyone enjoyed the parade last week, It was cold but a lot of fun.

PUBLIC COMMENTS GENERAL:

- NONE

ADJOURN:

- There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned upon a motion by D. LaPorte and supported by L. Clark. The next meeting scheduled will be held on January 8th, 2026.



Karla Swihart
City Clerk