

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Wednesday, July 2, 2025
6:30 pm

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Elizabeth El-Assadi
Stan Eldridge
Edward Burnett
David Marshall
Ericka Vonyea (Arrived at 6:32 pm)

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Mark Yandrick – Township Planning Director
Sally Elmiger - Carlisle Wortman

- **CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM**

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Ms. El-Assadi completed the roll call and confirmed a quorum was established.

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Burnett and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

- **APPROVAL OF JUNE 4, 2025, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to approve June 4, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Marshall and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

- **PUBLIC HEARING**

Applicant: Bank of America

Location: 2250 W Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Parcel ID: K-11-18-100-024

Request: Article 13 – Sec. 1303.3 (A & B): Site Design Standards Uses: Request for variance to permit lighting levels along the western property line to exceed the maximum allowable illumination of 0.5 footcandles.

Sally Elmiger informed the Zoning Board that the applicant made their original request for two lighting variances to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) at their February 5, 2025, meeting. The Board members asked the applicant to see if they could reduce the proposed lighting levels along the west property line and under the ATM canopy. The applicant has revised the plans and has returned to the ZBA to reconsider the request.

There were two previous two variances. One variance exceeded the maximum allowable footcandle reading on the site, and the applicant has eliminated the need for that variance by reducing the lighting levels below the maximum allowed, which is 20-footcandles. The second variance was the request for 13-footcandles along the west property line, which is adjacent to a residential property. The applicant's revised plans show a reduction to 4.2-footcandles. The maximum allowed along a property line that is shared between commercial and residential use is 0.5 feet. Even though it is still above the 0.5-foot lighting levels, it is substantially less than what was previously requested.

The planning staff have reviewed the revised plan against the criteria in the ordinance, and the staff have considered the proposal to meet all the criteria.

Sally Elmiger shared with the Zoning Board that the property has exceptional circumstances. The bank has been in the same location for years, with its drive-through located on the west side of the building adjacent to a residential property. Moving the drive-through to meet the ordinance would be overly burdensome. The ordinance's lighting standards are intended to minimize potential impacts on nearby residences; however, the ordinance also intends to allow lighting levels that will provide a safe environment for night-time use of a site.

Tyler Wilson, a contractor for PCI-Dailey Company representing Bank of America, informed the ZBA that the Bank of America policy upgrade requires the elevation of lighting for security purposes. The lighting level is slightly above the requirements of the ZBA. The applicant hopes that by lowering the amount of variance, the proposal will be approved. Mr. Wilson informed the ZBA that the footcandles are down to zero within 35 feet of the property line, and the residential neighborhood is 210 feet from the property line.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 6:37 PM

(Hearing no comments)

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 6:37 PM

MOTION: Mr. Marshall **MOVED** to approve the variance request at 2250 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Parcel K-11-18-100-024 to the lighting requirements of Article 13, Section 1303.3 (A & B) of the Township Zoning Ordinance, as shown on the plans submitted with the Zoning Board of Appeals Packet identified as V3 250307. Granting the requested variance meets the criteria for a non-use variance in Section 1704 (D) of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the approval is based on the following findings of fact:

- The location of the ATMs next to the residential property to the west represents unique circumstances that do not apply to other properties in this zoning district, creating practical difficulty.
- Without an adequately lit night-time environment, the bank's use of this site is greatly diminished. Therefore, the variance is needed for the safe, continued operation of the ATMs
- The maximum lighting levels at the property line are 4.2 footcandles, but they fade to almost zero, which is approximately 35 feet into the residentially used property. The residential building is approximately 210 feet from the property line. It is unlikely that the proposed light levels will negatively impact the residential use of the neighboring property.
- The need for adequate lighting is heightened given that the land use is a bank, and that their customers use ATMs at night. The proposed lighting levels have been substantially reduced to reach a balance between this property's need to create a safe environment for its customers and minimizing light spill onto the residential property next door. The need for variance is not self-created.
- The request has reduced the number of variances from two to one, and the amount of the variance has also been substantially reduced, minimizing the needed variance to achieve adequate site lighting.

The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Burnett.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Stan Eldridge (Yes); Mr. David Marshall (Yes); Ericka Vonyea (Yes); Mr. Burnett (Yes); Ms. Elizabeth El-Assadi (Yes);

MOTION PASSED.

- **OPEN DISCUSSION FOR ISSUES NOT ON AGENDA**

- **PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Sally Elmiger introduced the new Township Planning Director, Mark Yandrick to the Zoning Board.

Mark Yandrick shared with the ZBA that he hails from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and he previously worked with Pontiac, Michigan. Mark Yandrick expressed his interest in working with the Planning Department and Carlisle Wortman.

- **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

None to Report.

- **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS**

None to Report.

- **MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE/PUBLIC**

Jan Curry (West Michigan Avenue) shared with the ZBA the major improvements at the residential site adjacent to Bank of America. During her visit to the bank, she asked about a few additional projects and processes.

- **OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE ZONING BOARD**

None to Report.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to adjourn at 6:44 p.m. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Vonyea and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by Minutes Services