

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Elizabeth El-Assadi
Stan Eldridge
Edward Burnett
David Marshell
Ericka Vonyea

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Mark Yandrick – Planning Director
Sally Elmiger - Carlisle Wortman

- **CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM**

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 JULY 2, 2025, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: Ms. Vonyea **MOVED** to approve July 2, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Eldridge and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

- **PUBLIC HEARING**

Applicant: Zippy Auto Wash

Location: 1822 W Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Parcel ID: K-11-39-252-022

Request: Article 5 – Sec. 503.4, Building Form A.2: Request for variance to locate the building further back on the site than the required 10-foot build-to-line along E. Ellsworth Rd.

Article 5 – Sec. 503.4, Building Form A.2: Request to locate parking within the front yard along E. Ellsworth Rd.

Article 13 – Sec. 1302.2.C: Request to locate a trash receptacle screen in the E. Ellsworth front yard of the site, and adjacent to a street.

Sally Elmiger (Planning Consultant - Carlisle Wortman) informed the Zoning Board that the applicant has proposed to redevelop an existing auto wash with a new auto wash. The proposal is to change the location of the building.

Following are the variances:

- **Building cannot meet the 10-foot building two line along Ellsworth and Michigan Avenue at the same time:** Ms. Elmiger stated that the applicant is locating the building on the 10-foot “build-to-line” along Michigan Ave., vs. Ellsworth. In reviewing the site plan, CWA opinion is that W. Michigan Ave. is the dominant corridor, based on the Township’s Master Plan and descriptions of this corridor. Therefore, the recommendation is for the building to be placed on the W. Michigan Ave. build-to-line.
- **Location of parking and dumpster at the front yard:** Ms. Elmiger shared that according to the zoning ordinance, a front yard is any land that is located between a street right of way and the face of a building. Due to the unusual shape of the lot and two front yards, the car park must be located in a front yard, as there is no other place to put it. Since the building must be located on the build-to-line, any property behind the building (due to Ellsworth) is considered a front yard. Again, the shape of the lot creates two front yards, creating practical difficulty for parking at the front yard. This also creates difficulty for the location of the dumpster.
- Ms. Elmiger informed the ZBA that the variances are needed for the Ellsworth side, with the location of the parking and the trash receptacle at Ellsworth

front yard. CWA recommends that granting of the three variances will preserve the property rights of the owner. The proposed project will redevelop an underutilized property along one of the Township's main corridors. The redevelopment into a viable business will benefit adjacent property owners. The constructed part of this project is located away from the residential properties to the west, preserving significant existing vegetation that can help screen the nearby homes from the activity, noise, and lights of this proposal. The hours of operation for this use are 7am-8pm (Monday– Saturday); and 8am-8-pm (Sunday) which limits activity on the site and impacts adjacent neighbors.

- Ms. Elmiger stated that granting the variances will establish a use that is consistent with the vision in the master plan for West Michigan Avenue. The master plan calls for a mix of uses along this corridor, which consist of residential, commercial, office and employment opportunities. Zippy Auto Wash will be able to accomplish those things. The plan states that the intent of this designation is to improve the function, investment, value and esthetics of this corridor, and redeveloping the site will achieve these goals.
- The applicant, nor his predecessors, created the unusual shape of this site, which creates the need for the requested variances.

The Zoning Board Commissioners went into discussion.

- Commissioner Burnett inquired about the rebuilding of the old site; Greg O'Brien (Engineer for Zippy Car Wash) informed the ZBA that the existing building is not in a good condition for usage, and it needs to be redeveloped. The proposal is to build a 4,900 Sq Ft automated tunnel auto wash with two pay terminals and 12 vacuum stations/parking spaces. The parking lot will also offer 5 employee parking spaces.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 6:43 PM

Resident John (1974 Ellsworth) stated that he has lived north of the property since 1983. One of the requirements for the buildings is to be part of the neighborhood, but it wasn't accomplished; the building is being built on a wetland.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 6:45 PM

Ms. Elmiger informed the public that the provisions of the previous zoning ordinance would not match the current ordinance. The land surveys do not show a wetland.

The applicant stated that the building is located on a detention basin (they do receive water on a regular basis); the site would maintain the natural features towards the west, and the addition of landscaping towards the north (providing screening for the site).

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to approve the following variance requests from the Township Zoning Ordinance, at 1822 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Parcel K-11-39-252-022:

1. From Article 5 – Sec. 503.4, Building Form A.2 to locate the building further back on the site than the required 10-foot build-to-line along E. Ellsworth Rd.
2. From Article 5 – Sec. 503.4, Building Form A.2 to locate parking within the front yard along E. Ellsworth Rd.
3. From Article XIII – Sec. 1302.2.C to locate a trash receptacle screen in the E. Ellsworth front yard of the site, and adjacent to a street as shown on the plans submitted with the Zoning Board of Appeals Packet dated June 2, 2025. Granting the requested variances meet the criteria for a non-use variance in Section 1704(2)(D) of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the approval is based on the following findings:
 - a. The applicant has demonstrated the presence of extraordinary circumstances applying to the property that prevent compliance with the setback and locational zoning requirements. The unusual shape of the property, and the fact that the shape creates two front yards, are conditions that are atypical of other corner lots within the zoning district.
 - b. The request is necessary for the preservation of a substantial property right. Any redevelopment of the property would require variances, given the odd shape and two front yards. The variances will allow development to proceed and preserve the property rights that others in the zoning district possess.
 - c. The proposed development will create a viable business on an underutilized property, benefiting adjacent property owners. The plan will preserve significant vegetation between the business and neighboring residential properties, helping to screen activity, noise and light. Lastly, the proposal will help to improve the character of both corridors with an attractive building and significant landscaping.

- d. The need for the variance is not self-created, as the applicant did not create the odd shaped lot or two front yards.
- e. The variance requested is the minimum necessary to redevelop the property into a viable business at this location.

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

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

MOTION PASSED.

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

- **PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

- None to Report.

- **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

- None to Report.

- **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS**

- None to Report.

- **MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE/PUBLIC**

- None to Report.

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

- None to Report.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Burnett and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by Minutes Services