

Ganges Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes for November 18, 2025
Ganges Township Hall
119th Avenue and 64th Street
Fennville MI, Allegan County

I. Call to Order - Roll Call

Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call: Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** - Present

Vice Chair: Dale **Pierson** - Present

Secretary: Phil **Badra** - Present

Commissioner: Edward **Gregory** - Present

Commission Trustee: Dick **Hutchins** - Present

Zoning Administrator: Tasha **Smalley** - Present

Recording Secretary: Katie **Wolfe** - Present

McKenna Planner: Kevin **Garcia** - Present

II. Additions to the Agenda and adoption

Gregory made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. **Badra** seconded the motion.
Motion passed.

III. General Public Comments

Chuck **Mannion** – 6611 Deer Trl. explained what single strand barbed wire is, referencing the previous meeting.

IV. Correspondence and Upcoming Seminars

Smalley to **DeZwaan** Re: 3rd quarter Mineral Mining Report from Ciesla

2 **Badra** to **McKenna**, with reply Fwd to **PC** Re: Zoning Ordinance update work

2 **Pierson** to **PC** Re: Zoning Ordinance update

Badra to **McKenna**, with reply Fwd to **PC** Re: Definition

Pierson to **PC**, Fwd to the **ZBA Chair** Re: ZBA updates

Badra to **McKenna**, with reply Fwd to **PC** Re: Zoning update

V. Public Hearing – None

VI. Approval of Prior Minutes

Motion made by **Pierson**, seconded by **Badra** to approve the October 28, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes, with corrections. Motion passed.

VII. Old Business

1. Zoning Ordinance Discussion

Kevin **Garcia** introduced himself as the new Planner from McKenna. He continued that he looked over the Zoning Ordinance corrections and incorporated them as necessary.

The definition for Fence Height was incorporated into the Definitions section and the rest of the edits were in the Fences section. **Badra** noted that he would like FENCE HEIGHT ~~that~~ to be put in the Fence section versus the Definitions.

Garcia had a suggestion about temporary fences in the Lakeshore Overlay District. **Badra** stated that he would like that to be in the Fence section as well, saying, “Fences are not allowed except for temporary fences as allowed in the Lakeshore Overlay District Shoreline Protection Section 2.a.”

Page 3-24, Edit 3.33 Food Trucks Part A to say, “Food trucks, not associated with wineries and breweries, may cater outdoor public entertainment events only if approved by the Ganges Township Board and must be removed from the property at the conclusion of the event.”

Page 10-1, remove the word “district” in Article 10. And allow Manufactured Housing Communities in the Commercial District only.

Page 11-3, add Manufactured Housing Communities as a permitted use.

Page 11-3, change Lumber yard to permitted.

Page 18-29, BB.5. Add, “up to two (2) food trucks are allowed as accessory uses.”

Page 18-29, BB. Omit number 2.

Page 18-31, DD.4. Add, “up to two (2) food trucks are allowed as accessory uses.”

In regards to separating “elementary, middle and high schools” from “trade, industrial and commercial schools” **Garcia** stated that he would like more time

to look into conditions for each school classification. He will report back at the next meeting.

Add the following definitions: “Public parks are a natural or landscaped area provided by a unit of government for recreation.” A public park is permitted.

“Private parks are a natural or landscaped area provided by a private entity for recreation.” A private park requires site plan review.

The following edits were made to **Smalley’s** draft of Section 20.5 Applications and Hearings:

- **Pierson** noted that the ZBA Chair, Carol **Josefowicz**, noted that she would like to see that B.3.a. says: “legal description, parcel number and details on the total area in acres or square feet.”
- **Josefowicz** suggested under easements and rights-of-way the ZBA would like to see: “the location of utility easements and public rights-of-ways for roads or streets.”
- B.3.c. should say: “Site plan, drawn to scale, showing the variance request, including all setbacks measured from the overhang or farthest protruding part of the structure. Show all other structures including the use (house, garage, shed, etc.).”
- Add B.5. A statement with regard to compliance with the standards of Section 20.4.A., as applicable.
- Add to the end of B.3.b.: “must accompany the variance application along with appropriate property markings on site to indicate the location of the variance request.”

Pierson will rewrite Section 20.5, including the previous edits, and send the draft to **Garcia**.

The **PC** noted that they would like a clear statement in the site plan approval ordinance that states by signing the site plan, the applicant agrees to all conditions.

Page 16-10. Section 16.7 Insert a new letter B and reformat the successive bullet points. The new letter B should say: “The applicant, by signing the approved site plan, agrees to abide by all the conditions placed on the approval.”

2. Lake Michigan Overlay District Discussion

DeZwaan noted that the District name should be changed to “Lake Michigan Shoreline Overlay District”.

BADRA SUGGESTED adding the definition of ORV to the definition section.

The definition states:

“any motor vehicle that can be operated cross-country (without benefit of a road or trail) over land, snow, and other natural terrain. This includes multi-track or multi-wheel vehicles; all-terrain vehicles (ATVs); motorcycles or related multi-wheel vehicles; amphibious machines (water-to-land and back); hovercrafts; and other vehicles that use mechanical power, including two- or four-wheel-drive vehicles that are highway registered but operated off highways or off roads. The following are not considered ORVs by Michigan law: registered snowmobiles; farm, construction, or logging vehicles when being used in usual work practices; and military, fire, emergency, and law enforcement vehicles.”

Add to Uses: “5. According to MCL 324.81133 and MCL 324.32502 it is illegal to operate ORVs below the Ordinary High Water Mark for the Great Lakes. ORVs can be operated on private land above or landward of the Ordinary High Water Mark only with written permission of the property owners involved. Horseback riding on the shorelines of the Great Lakes is prohibited unless authorized as can occur at Silver Lake State Park. Violations can be reported to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by phoning or texting 1-800-292-7800.”

DeZwaan decided to push the Lake Michigan Shoreline Overlay District Discussion to the following meeting.

3. Campground SLU Discussion

The PC went over the edits that Garcia made to the Campground SLU Standards. The following were edits to that document (C-1):

- Edit to say: “Park models, camping cabins and resort cabins are not permitted.”
- Under Access and Parking, edit to say, “Campgrounds must be on a primary road, as designated by the Allegan County Road Commission.”
- At the bottom of the first page, change Commercial uses to “A Retail use..”
- Under retail uses, edit to say, “They shall occupy no more than two thousand (2,000) square feet in total.”
- Unstrike the marijuana and alcohol use sections, if it is permitted.
- Unstrike “Vehicles and trailers from any other site outside of the campground are not allowed.”
- Edit the first paragraph in Lighting to say, “To keep campground lighting from unduly impacting surrounding residences and campsites,”

VIII. New Business – None

IX. Administrative Updates

a. Township Board

Hutchins reported that the Township Board formed a committee to begin working on a short-term rental ordinance. He also noted that the Township Board has a Special Meeting on Monday, November 24th.

b. Zoning Board of Appeals

Pierson had nothing to report.

c. Zoning Administrator

Smalley reported that Campit applied for an extension of their campground. She did not accept their application because there is a Moratorium.

X. Future Meeting Dates – December 15th at 7:00 PM

XI. General Public Comments

Marsha **Maslanka** – 1811 66th St. noted that she is a part of the short-term rental committee. She mentioned a company called Granicus that helps to research rentals in the area.

Diana **Decker** – 1705 Lake Michigan Dr. noted other townships that have had Moratoriums on short term rentals. She also shared her experience using Granicus with the City of Saugatuck.

XII. Adjournment

Gregory made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Pierson** seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katelynn Wolfe, Ganges Township Recording Secretary