

VILLAGE OF PINCKNEY
PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes

TUESDAY, June 24, 2025 – 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kraut at 7:00 pm.

Present:

- Alex Smith (Vice-Chairperson)
- Savanna Gee (Secretary)
- Christine Oliver
- Bree Kraut (Chairperson)
- Robert Coppersmith II
- Justin McInnes
- Mike Carney

Absent:

- Tricia Wagner
- Jennifer Cooke (Ad hoc Member)

Also Present:

- Jeffrey Buerman (Village Council President)
- Lucie Fortin (Village Planner)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Kraut led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Tricia Wagner, supported by Savanna Gee.

To approve the agenda with the following changes:

VOTE: Ayes: 5 Nays: — Absent: 1 Vacancy: — MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Robert Coppersmith, supported by Justin McInnes.

To approve the minutes of the June 2, 2025 regular meeting.

VOTE: Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Vacancy: — MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS

Council: • Budget approved with a deficit in the \$300,000 - \$400,000 range. The Village is working on ways to reduce the deficit, including looking at water rate increases. General Appropriations Act for the budget approved. Martina Finnicks has been appointed as a new DDA member. Cemetery plot fee for non-residents discussed; proposed increase to \$2,000 (currently \$750 for both residents and non-residents). Requests have been made for additional training trash cans along the Lakeland Trail. No updates on the Means project, the Village is waiting until the July meeting to revoke their marijuana license. Essence is doing a final site plan review, and hopefully will commence work within the next month and a half. Bliss and Fish is officially open. Overall many positive things happening for and within the Village.

Chair: Chairperson Kraut indicated that it seems on social media, specifically Facebook, there have been numerous posts regarding the Village of Pinckney and the Master Plan. These posts used disrespectful language, contained misinformation and some were threatening in nature and frankly concerning. A lot of the posts in question were made by individuals whom Chairperson Kraut has not seen in attendance at the Village of Pinckney Council or Planning Commission meetings.

Secretary/Vice-Chair: Vice-Chairperson Smith disclosed that he had partaken in the Village of Pinckney's survey regarding the Master Plan and wanted to be transparent with that as he serves on the Planning Commission. Kraut agreed that she also took the survey. Secretary Gee was not able to attend the Town Hall but was eager to hear others' thoughts on the event.

PUBLIC FORUM

Chairperson Kraut opened public forum at 7:05 pm.

- Roger Myers (915 North Michigan Avenue, Howell) — Roger addressed the proposed special use permit. He submitted a letter in opposition on behalf of Pinckney Petroleum LLC (owner of the BP store across from the subject property). Concerns included oversaturation of gasoline service, traffic impacts (recommended traffic impact study; unsure if completed), and potential reduction in parking that could exacerbate circulation issues. Requested denial of the special land use permit.

Hearing no further public comment, public forum was closed by Chairperson Kraut at 7:07 pm.

SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT DISCUSSION

- The meeting is for the proposed approval of the special land use permit.

- Letter from Roger L. Myers (Myers & Myers PLLC) read aloud: representing Pinckney Petroleum LLC, opposing the permit.
- Concerns: oversaturation of gasoline service locations; detrimental traffic impacts from new development (gasoline service/fast food drive-thru); parking issues; non-compliance with road setback requirements; request to deny the special use permit.
- MDOT is conducting a traffic study (not yet completed).
- The vote is solely on approval of the special land use permit (converting the property from a pharmacy to a Mug and Box store).
- Other environmental and criteria-related steps are part of a separate process.
- Lucie's report from the last meeting addressed the issue of parking reduction, which will need to be addressed at the site planning level.
- Lucie recommends a condition for a setback along Dexter Pinckney between the trail/sidewalk and the pavement of the property; absence of a green space or landscape strip would require a variance and is considered poor planning and unsafe. A variance will be required regardless, as a 10-foot setback is normally required.

Parking Lot and Setback Concerns

- The side of the parking lot facing Dexter Pinckney is pushing into the grass, leaving little to no space.
- The current layout appears to use all available space without allowing for the required 10-foot minimum landscape strip (see §152.331).
- There should also be a front setback, which is normally 25 feet.

Applicant Response (Brent Labano, Boss Engineering)

- The current plan along Dexter Pinckney Road has about a two-foot buffer.
- A revised site plan will be resubmitted with an increased buffer, but it is not yet at 10 feet.
- The applicant requests consideration of approval for the two special land uses (gasoline and drive-through).
- The applicant wishes to further discuss the Dexter Pinckney Road buffer with the Planning Commission and planning consultant.

Conditions and Variances

- A condition can be added to the permit, approving it contingent on a certain amount of space.
- The applicant believes imposing an arbitrary number for the setback without full discussion is problematic.
- The applicant is confident they can satisfy Lucie's concerns and requests approval for gas and a drive-through with the understanding that other details will be worked out later.
- A condition for a landscape strip can be reserved along both roadways without specifying a specific number.

- The ZBA can approve a variance even if a 10-foot setback is specified; a requirement for green space may be preferable to specifying 10 feet.

Considerations for the Vote

- Alex Smith shared his rationale, noting it is not government's role to decide business winners or losers; new businesses should not be blocked simply because older ones exist.
- A new gas station could encourage existing ones to improve their appeal.
- Respect for the certifier's request regarding the green space setback.
- Pinckney Petroleum interjected, noting that trust should not be based solely on knowing someone or their business history.
- Lucie and Bree responded that checks and balances are in place, including the MDOT survey. The actual distance of the green space will be determined during site plan approval.
- A variance is needed before proceeding with the site plan if the current layout is not compliant. The Village Council will act as the ZBA.

Discussions with TJ and Todd

- Mobility on the lot is important. The applicant is willing to add approximately 20 ft of driving surface to the south and east sides of the building.
- The applicant seeks approval for converting the drive-through and adding gas.
- The extension of the driving surface toward the east side of the building will not affect current residents.

Motion to Approve

A motion was made to approve the special land use request for a gas station and fast food restaurant with a drive-through window at 75 South Dexter.

VOTE: Ayes: 5 Nays: 1 Absent: 1 Vacancy: — MOTION CARRIED

Roll Call on Motion:

- Alex Smith (Vice-Chairperson) – Yes
- Savanna Gee (Secretary) – Yes
- Christine Oliver – No
- Bree Kraut (Chairperson) – Yes
- Robert Coppersmith III – Yes
- Tricia Wagner – Absent
- Justin McInnes – Yes

PUBLIC FORUM

Chairperson Kraut opened public forum at 7:33 pm.

Hearing no comment, Chairperson Kraut closed public forum at 7:33 pm.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Opened: 7:34 pm

Marijuana Retail and Special Use Permit: The discussion on July 7 will focus on a special land use permit for a change of use, not the final say. There are currently no retail licenses available, and the existing one will be allowed to expire per Village Council recommendation. A report was made about concrete washout being dumped into a storm drain in Village Edge. Efforts are underway to recoup losses to the Village, and legal counsel is amending and rewriting the proposal. Robert Coppersmith will be absent from the July 7 meeting.

Closed: 7:37 pm

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Justin McInnes to adjourn, supported by Gee, to adjourn the regular Planning Commission meeting at 7:38 pm.

VOTE: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 1 Vacancy: — MOTION CARRIED

Motion made and Pass; Chairperson Kraut called for adjournment at 7:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bree Kraut, Chairperson

Savanna Gee, Secretary