



January 22, 2026

Jeff Buerman
Village of Pinckney
220 S. Howell
Pinckney, Michigan 48169

Subject: Zoning Variance Request
Grant's Place Apartments

Applicant: HWPOET LLC - Chris Bonk, 5755 Long Pointe Drive, Howell, MI 48843

Location: Former St. Mary's Church
551 E. Hamburg St. (Parcels # 4714-23-304-080)

Zoning: R4, Multiple-Family Residential

Dear Mr. Buerman:

At the Village's request, we have prepared the following draft resolutions for the Zoning Board of Appeals' consideration at their upcoming meeting of February 23, 2026. The draft resolutions pertain to the variance request for Grant's Place Apartments.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

The development proposal involves rehabilitating the former St. Mary's Church into apartment units. The project will use Village housing grants funds and private financing to separate the church sanctuary -which will be converted into seven apartments- from the rear L-shape building, which will be split and rehabilitated into two duplexes in a future phase.

This project received site plan approval from the Planning Commission on January 5, 2026, contingent on both zoning variance approval and land division approval.

The attached resolutions focus on a non-use zoning variance from Section 152.123 (C)(2), *Side Yard*, of the Village of Pinckney Zoning Ordinance to reduce the minimum side yard from the required 6 feet to 5 feet between the proposed apartment building and the proposed property split.

As is customary for the Zoning Board of Appeals, attached are three resolution options:

- Option 1. A resolution granting the variance
- Option 2. A resolution granting the variance with conditions
- Option 3. A resolution denying the variance

Lucie Fortin

Lucie Fortin
Community Planner/Landscape Architect



TECHNICAL SKILL.
CREATIVE SPIRIT.

OPTION 1 - GRANTING VARIANCE

BE IT RESOLVED that the Pinckney Board of Zoning Appeals hereby finds, with respect to a variance requested by Chris Bonk of 5755 Long Pointe Drive, Howell, MI 48843, from the Village of Pinckney Zoning Ordinance, being Pinckney Code of Ordinances, Section 152.123 *Site Development Standards*; Subsection (C), *Yards and setbacks*; Paragraph (2) *Side yard*; as to the minimum side yard between the renovated apartment building and the proposed lot line for the property located at 551 E. Hamburg Street, Pinckney, MI 48169, being Taxation Parcel Identification Number 4714-23-304-080, and legally described as set forth in Attachment A, as follows:

1. A practical difficulty exists that justifies flexibility from the strict application of the Zoning Ordinance due to the unique physical conditions of the property and the nature of the request. The project involves the adaptive reuse of an existing nonconforming building and site, where buildable space is constrained by the placement and configuration of existing structures. These conditions are unique to the property and are not related to the applicant's personal circumstances.

The proposed separation between buildings occurs at the location of an existing chimney, mechanical equipment, and a basement stairway. While the chimney is removed, the stairway width is regulated by building code, limiting the extent to which the structure can be modified. As a result of these structural constraints, a total separation distance of 11 feet can be achieved between the two detached buildings. The proposed lot split places the interior lot line 5 feet from the east wall of the new apartment building and 6 feet from the west wall of the duplex. This configuration allows the duplex to meet the R4 side yard requirements and necessitates a side yard variance for the apartment building from 6 feet to 5 feet.

2. Denial of the requested variance would deprive the owner of reasonable use of the property and would constitute more than a mere inconvenience or inability to achieve a higher financial return. Granting the variance allows for a viable and reasonable use of the property by enabling modifications that remain consistent with the intent of the zoning district. Strict adherence to the R4 side yard requirement would impose unnecessary hardship due to the existing building placement.
3. Granting the variance will result in substantial justice, as it allows for the rehabilitation of a long-vacant building into active residential use. This redevelopment provides clear public benefits, including reinvestment in the property, an expanded tax base, and improved neighborhood conditions.
4. The granting of the variance is not contrary to the public interest, does not violate the intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and is supported by the Master Plan which encourages the reuse of vacant, nonconforming buildings. Rehabilitation of the former church building will enhance surrounding property values and improve the northern gateway into the Village. The project brings the site into substantial compliance with current ordinance requirements related to building appearance, landscaping, and long-term maintenance.

The requested variance is consistent with the intent of the R4 District to promote safe, high-quality residential environments and supports the Master Plan's objectives by encouraging redevelopment of vacant properties and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. The resulting improvements will positively benefit surrounding properties and the community as a whole.

5. Granting the variance does not constitute a special privilege. The request is unique to the property, represents the minimum deviation necessary, and allows the continued use of the existing building. It does not grant the applicant an advantage inconsistent with other properties within the district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that based on the aforementioned findings of practical difficulty, the variance requested by the Petitioner is hereby granted so the apartment building to be located with a 5 foot side yard setback from the proposed property line.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Pinckney Board of Zoning Appeals hereby finds, with respect to a variance requested by Chris Bonk of 5755 Long Pointe Drive, Howell, MI 48843, from the Village of Pinckney Zoning Ordinance, being Pinckney Code of Ordinances, Section 152.123 *Site Development Standards*; Subsection (C), *Yards and setbacks*; Paragraph (2) *Side yard*; as to the minimum side yard between the renovated apartment building and the proposed lot line for the property located at 551 E. Hamburg Street, Pinckney, MI 48169, being Taxation Parcel Identification Number 4714-23-304-080, and legally described as set forth in Attachment A, as follows:

6. A practical difficulty exists that justifies flexibility from the strict application of the Zoning Ordinance due to the unique physical conditions of the property and the nature of the request. The project involves the adaptive reuse of an existing nonconforming building and site, where buildable space is constrained by the placement and configuration of existing structures. These conditions are unique to the property and are not related to the applicant's personal circumstances.

The proposed separation between buildings occurs at the location of an existing chimney, mechanical equipment, and a basement stairway. While the chimney is removed, the stairway width is regulated by building code, limiting the extent to which the structure can be modified. As a result of these structural constraints, a total separation distance of 11 feet can be achieved between the two detached buildings. The proposed lot split places the interior lot line 5 feet from the east wall of the new apartment building and 6 feet from the west wall of the duplex. This configuration allows the duplex to meet the R4 side yard requirements and necessitates a side yard variance for the apartment building from 6 feet to 5 feet.

7. Denial of the requested variance would deprive the owner of reasonable use of the property and would constitute more than a mere inconvenience or inability to achieve a higher financial return. Granting the variance allows for a viable and reasonable use of the property by enabling modifications that remain consistent with the intent of the zoning district. Strict adherence to the R4 side yard requirement would impose unnecessary hardship due to the existing building placement.
8. Granting the variance will result in substantial justice, as it allows for the rehabilitation of a long-vacant building into active residential use. This redevelopment provides clear public benefits, including reinvestment in the property, an expanded tax base, and improved neighborhood conditions.
9. The granting of the variance is not contrary to the public interest, does not violate the intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and is supported by the Master Plan which encourages the reuse of vacant, nonconforming buildings. Rehabilitation of the former church building will enhance surrounding property values and improve the northern gateway into the Village. The project brings the site into substantial compliance with current ordinance requirements related to building appearance, landscaping, and long-term maintenance.

The requested variance is consistent with the intent of the R4 District to promote safe, high-quality residential environments and supports the Master Plan's objectives by encouraging redevelopment of vacant properties and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. The resulting improvements will positively benefit surrounding properties and the community as a whole.

10. Granting the variance does not constitute a special privilege. The request is unique to the property, represents the minimum deviation necessary, and allows the continued use of the existing building. It does not grant the applicant an advantage inconsistent with other properties within the district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that based on the aforementioned findings of practical difficulties, the variance requested by the Petitioner is hereby granted so the apartment building may be located with a 5-foot side yard setback from the proposed property line.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the variance granted to the Petitioner shall be subject to strict compliance with the following conditions:

1. The variance shall apply only to this specific property.
2. The variance shall be valid only upon approval of the proposed lot split by the Planning Commission and the Village Council.
3. All site improvements shall be installed in strict accordance with the plans and specifications submitted with the variance request and as approved through the site plan review by the Planning Commission.
4. _____
5. _____

OPTION 3 - DENIAL OF VARIANCE

BE IT RESOLVED that the Pinckney Board of Zoning Appeals hereby finds, with respect to the request for a variance requested by Chris Bonk of 5755 Long Pointe Drive, Howell, MI 48843, from the Village of Pinckney Zoning Ordinance, being Pinckney Code of Ordinances, Section 152.123 *Site Development Standards*; Subsection (C) *Yards and setbacks*; Paragraph (2) *Side yard*; as to the minimum side yard between the renovated apartment building and the proposed lot line for the property located at 551 E. Hamburg Street, Pinckney, MI 48169, being Taxation Parcel Identification Number 4714-23-304-080, and legally described as set forth in Attachment A, as follows:

1. That requested variance is not necessary, as the property does not exhibit unique physical characteristics and is subject to conditions common to other properties within the area.
2. The proposed side yard setback does not meet the minimum requirement of the Multi-Family Residential (R4) Zoning District, and the property can be reasonably utilized without the requested deviation.
3. Granting the variance may create an undue burden on adjacent properties.
4. The location and configuration of the site are not unique and reflect conditions generally applicable to R4 District properties that comply with minimum yard setbacks.
5. The claimed need of the side yard setback deviation is self-created, as it results from the petitioner's proposal to modify an existing non-conforming building.
6. The Petitioner has failed to demonstrate that strict compliance with the minimum side yard setback requirement would result in undue hardship or practical difficulties.
7. Granting the variance would be injurious to the public welfare of nearby properties, would be inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the Pinckney Zoning Ordinance, and would perpetuate nonconforming conditions on the property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that based on the aforementioned findings, the Petitioner's request for a side yard variance is hereby denied.

Attachment A
Legal Description

That part of Block 4, Range 1, of JW Hinchey Addition to the Village of Pinckney, Livingston County, Michigan according to the recorded Plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 51D, Page 452, Livingston County Records, beginning at the SE corner of Lot 8, thence South 86° 10' 13" West 263.02 feet; thence North 06°36'03" West 132.18 feet; thence North 86° 10' 13" East 263.02 feet; thence South 06°36'03" East 132.18 feet to the point of beginning. (Tax Parcel No. 4714-23-304-080)