GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Regular Meeting
September 15, 2026

MINUTES

Call to Order

Chairperson McCreary called the regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals to order at 6:30 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

The following members were present constituting a quorum for the transaction of business: Chairperson Marianne McCreary, Craig Fons, Michele Kreutzberg, Bill Rockwell, and Rick Soucy.

Also present was Zoning Official Carrie Aulette and eight people in the audience.

Introductions

The members of the Board and staff introduced themselves.

Conflict of Interest - None

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Soucy, supported by Kreutzberg, to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Call to the Public

The call to the public was made at 6:32 pm with no response.

Chairperson McCreary reviewed the criteria necessary for a variance to be approved.

Old Business

1. 26-14…A request by Mike Giacomantonio of W4 Signs, 2770 Grand River, for a sign variance and any other variances deemed necessary by the Zoning Board of Appeals, to place a sign in the road right of way.

Mr. Anthony Marinelli, a representative of the building owner, stated they are moving the sign as far as possible from Grand River and will be relocating the existing sidewalk around the sign. They are proposing a 7.5 foot tall sign, which would require a 1.5 foot variance. Their original request was to put the sign 17 feet from the road and now they are proposing to place it 21 feet from the road.

The board reviewed the updated site plan that was submitted, noting it does not correctly show what is being requested.

The call to the public was made at 6:49 pm with no response.

Moved by Kreutzberg, supported by Soucy, to approve Case #26-14 for W4 Signs on behalf of Mike Giacomantonio for 2700 Grand River Avenue for a dimensional variance of 1.5 feet from the maximum allowed of 6 feet, for a sign height of 7.5 feet to place a monument sign partially into the right of way, based on the following findings of facts:

- Strict compliance with the setbacks would unreasonably restrict the intended use of the property or pose difficulty for business identification. This variance will provide substantial justice, is the least necessary and would make the property consistent with properties in the General Commercial District.
- The variance is necessary, not self-created, and due to the extraordinary circumstances, such as the road right-of-way in relation to the building limits placement of a fully compliant monument sign. The variance will provide relief in allowing visibility to passing traffic with a reasonably sized sign to identify the tenants.
- The granting of the variance will not impair adequate light or air to adjacent properties, would not increase congestion or increase danger of fire or threaten public safety or welfare.
- The proposed variance would have little or no impact on the neighborhood development, continued use or value of adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood.

This approval is conditioned upon the following:

1. Any additional signage will require Township approval.
2. If the sign is lit, it must be the Townships lighting requirements for signs.
3. Applicant must present documentation with proposed placement on site plan to reflect the dimensions in the exact encroachment.
4. MDOT approval and permit area required.

The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

2. 26-15…A request by Michael Prudhomme, 3592 Kipling Circle, for rear and side yard setback variances and any other variances deemed necessary by the Zoning Board of Appeals, to build a detached garage.

Mr. Michael Prudhomme stated he is requesting a variance due to the topography of his yard. If he was to meet the setbacks, it would require extensive excavation and tree removal and put the structure within 25 feet of his house.

Ms. Kreutzberg asked if a survey has been done. Mr. Prudhomme stated there are markers on the property, but he cannot say that they are exact. He believes if they are not, they are off by inches.

Mr. Rockwell reviewed previous variance requests for accessory structures in this neighborhood. Two of them were withdrawn, one was denied, and two were approved for smaller structures and due to the locations of the well and septics. The request is supposed to be the least amount necessary. The applicant is requesting large variances.

Ms. Aulette stated there are at least five approved variances in this neighborhood.

Mr. Prudhomme stated he cannot meet the rear yard setback. He can move it further toward the front but will still need a variance. This would not disturb the neighbors because there are large pines and this location is lower than the adjacent properties.

Mr. Fons agrees that this is the ideal location on the site to put the structure; however, it does not meet the township's ordinance.

The call to the public was made at 7:15 pm.

Mr. Peter Kula of 3796 Kipling owns the house behind Mr. Prudhomme. He stated there is a lot of property in his backyard. He will see it from his house if it is put where it is being proposed. He is the president of the homeowner's association and their requirements are that the structure must be 12 x 12 minimum and the board has to approve the architecture.

The call to the public was closed at 7:17 pm.

Mr. Prudhomme reiterated that moving the structure further toward the front would be very close to his house and at a higher elevation. The location he has proposed is much lower. It would not be an eyesore. Keeping equipment outside would be an eyesore.

Moved by Kreutzberg, supported by Rockwell to table Case #26-15 for Michael Prudhomme until the October 20, 2026 ZBA meeting, at the applicant's request. **The motion carried unanimously**.

3. 26-16…A request by Mitts LLC, 5776 E. Grand River, for a side yard setback variance and any other variances deemed necessary by the Zoning Board of Appeals, for parking lot expansion.

Mr. Chris Grzenkowicz, the design engineer, provided a review of the property and the proposed project. They are requesting an eight-foot side-yard variance. There are nine parking spaces, which is sufficient for this business; however, the ordinance requires 23 spaces for this use. Parking cannot be put in the front of the property due to the setback requirements. They are proposing to make one driveway going in only and one going out only and add parking

spaces to each of those drives. They are proposing to bank parking spaces to avoid taking down trees. They also need to meet the Brighton Fire Authority's requirement for turning radius. He noted that all uses that are permitted, and those that require a special use at this property, would require a variance to meet the parking requirement.

Chairperson McCreary stated that if the fire department agrees with this, then she does also.

Mr. Grzenkowicz stated that 60 percent of their business is online, with only 40 percent at the store.

Mr. Soucy stated the proposed use compliments the other businesses in the area. He does not see any issues with this request. Mr. Fons agrees.

The call to the public was made at 7:42 pm with no response.

Moved by Rockwell, supported by Soucy, to approve Case #26-15 for Mitts, LLC for 5776 East Grand River, for a side yard variance of 8 feet from the required 10 feet for a side yard setback of 2 feet, to allow for additional parking, based on the following findings of fact:

- Strict compliance with the ordinance would prevent the applicant from having enough parking for the use. Granting of the requested variance does provide substantial justice or a substantial property right similar to that possessed by other businesses in this zoning district.
- The subject property possesses an irregular and angled lot configuration, with an existing principal structure occupying a substantial portion of the parcel. The relationship between the existing building, property boundaries, access points, and required vehicle circulation results in a limited usable area for parking. Strict application of the required side-yard setback would substantially reduce the functional parking area and would create practical difficulties in maintaining reasonable access and circulation on the site. These conditions are peculiar to the physical configuration and existing development of the property and are not the result of the applicant's actions. This issue is not self-created.
- The granting of the variance will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property or unreasonably increase the congestion in public streets or increase the danger of fire. Further, relocating these spaces out to two feet from the property line creates parking spaces that do not encroach into the Brighton Area Fire Departments clear turning radius.
- The proposed variance would have little or no impact on the appropriate development, continued use or value of adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood.

This approval is conditioned upon the following:

1. Applicant must obtain Site Plan Approval through Planning Commission.
2. Applicant must close off connection to the adjacent property at 5796 Grand River.
3. No outside sales or storage in the lot.

The motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Business:

1. Approval of minutes for the August 18, 2026 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

Moved by Kreutzberg, supported by Soucy, to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2026 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting as submitted. **The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Correspondence

Ms. Aulette stated there will be one new case on next month's agenda.

3. Member Discussion

Mr. Soucy stated absentee ballots will be mailed out next week.

The board discussed having previous similar variance requests included in the packet.

4. Adjournment

Moved by Fons, supported by Kreutzberg, to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 pm. **The motion carried unanimously**.

Respectfully submitted:

Patty Thomas, Recording Secretary