

**VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN**  
**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

**AUGUST 11, 2025**

**MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER AT 7:00 P.M.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ATTENDANCE *Begeman, Gurley, McLean, Stuut*  
ABSENT: *Cole, Daniel, Streeter*  
OTHERS PRESENT: *Manager McGrew, Clerk Storm-Artis, Attorney Graham, Engineer Woodhams*
4. WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC
5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETING BEING RECORDED
6. OPEN PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE COMMENT ON A REQUEST  
APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY EDWARD AND FLORENCE KUCINICH TRUST  
FOR INCREASED BUILDING SIZE  
*Motion by Stuut, supported by McLean to open the public hearing. All members voted in favor. Motion carried.*
7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Clerk Storm-Artis stated there were two emails received in opposition to the project. These emails were printed and presented to the ZBA and would be included in the minutes for the meeting.

Tess Severson spoke in opposition to the request for a larger building.

Michael Kranak spoke in opposition to the request explaining that this request does not meet the hardship qualifications required by the variance ordinance and evaluation criteria. He spoke about the hardship and it being self caused due to the type of use they are pursuing and not a property related hardship. He also explained that it did not meet the standards for the Village General Business district due to the special use and district purpose. Further, he described the building and use does not meet the criteria for the Village General Buisness District. The building and use would not be able to comply with adverse traffic, safety, noise, late night hours and light, exit and entries near intersections, and pedestrian concerns. He encouraged the ZBA to deny the request.

Clerk Storm-Artis clarified where the rest of the project was for the traffic study and special use being tabled at the planning commission, and the rezoning to Village General Business District. She also stated that two letters were received from the public. These would be publically posted with the minutes for record of public comment.

Jacqueline Davis spoke in support of the request. She spoke about the age of the ordinance and the limitation of 1000 square feet not being sufficient for most businesses. She stated this would bring in revenue and the property will sell at some point so the traffic will be an issue, if not for this but for something else.

Jeff Lonchor of CESO spoke on behalf of the developer. He stated they were pursuing a variance and following the steps in the process. He also spoke about the ordinance regulations being old. He stated they would be completing the traffic study and that it is a viable project and encouraged the approval.

Attorney Graham asked for clarification on the building size.

Jeff Lonchor clarified the building would be about 3200 square feet, and breakdowns on estimated size of the different areas within the building.

Attorney Graham and Pro Tem Begeman asked for comparisons to other Casey's in Southwest Michigan and standard design.

Jeff Lonchor explained that this is a standard design, and Casey's has small, medium and larger designs, but the proposed building for the Village of Mattawan falls into the smallest category of sizes. This project is slightly smaller than the one in Watervliet. The volume and location near highways generally have larger building layouts. With the only standard building design being a kiosk style for inter-city urban areas.

Michael Kranack clarified that just because the ordinance may be outdated, the ZBA must enforce the ordinance as it currently exists. He further explained the variance shall only be granted if all the hardship measures are met. There is no language that states the age of the ordinance can be taken into consideration when evaluating the variance request. If the ordinance is outdated a language adjustment should be made through an ordinance amendment process, not through the variance process. He also talked about market conditions and oversaturation with four other similar locations for fuel and several other businesses that sell pizza and similar items.

Richard Overholt spoke against the project as a whole. He stated that there was no need for an additional gas station, and the history of the property being a farm. He spoke about the impact to the community and unneeded service. This is against the quaint community of the Village.

Steve Kucinich spoke about his personal history with the community and the farmland having 105 year history. He talked about the other development in the area, such as McGillens Crossing and other developing. They had turned down several requests for developing the farmland in the past, but they are the last area to be developed. He stated that there were other variances that were approved for other projects but there are questions on this variance. He spoke about the pizza sales for the gas station and expressed his support of the project.

8. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

***Motion by Stuut, supported by Gurley to close the public hearing. All members voted in favor.***

9. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

*Motion by Stuut, supported by McLean to approve the agenda. All members voted in favor. Motion carried.*

10. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

11. OLD BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION & DECISION ON VARIANCE REQUEST SUBMITTED BY EDWARD AND FLORENCE KUCINICH TRUST

Attorney Graham clarified the previous practice of ZBA voting on the variance request and recommended the council table the decision until at least 5 members would be present, but that was at the discretion of the ZBA.

*Motion by Stuut, supported by Gurley to table the discussion until August 25, 2025. All members voted in favor. Motion carried.*

13. PUBLIC COMMENT *None*

14. COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

Michael Kranack asked for clarification of what is required for approval.

Attorney Graham clarified the need for 5 votes for approval and the opportunity for all members of the ZBA to be present, and give the applicant fair voting circumstances.

Steve Kuchinich stated they had turned down other offers for a business that would be in competition with Wagoner's.

A question regarding the building on the parcel.

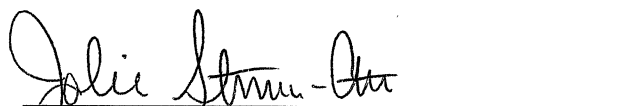
15. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS *None*

16. ADJOURNMENT @ 7:34 PM

*Motion by Stuut, supported by Gurley to adjourn. All members voted in favor. Motion carried.*

Council Approved 8/25/25

  
Luann Begeman, Council President Pro Tem

  
Jolie Storm-Artis, Village Clerk