



City Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda

Hoyt Library
505 Janes Avenue
August 25, 2026
6:00 PM

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes from July 28, 2026

Approval of Agenda

Public Comments

New Business

1. (J26-2879) Special Land Use – Utility, public 305 S 18th Street (public hearing)
2. Saginaw Housing & Economic Development Strategy (For Informational Purposes)

Old Business

Adjournment

Timothy Morales
City Manager

If you are disabled and need accommodation to provide you with an opportunity to participate or observe in programs, services, or activities, please call the Saginaw City Clerk, 1315 S. Washington Ave., 759-1480.



City Planning Commission

Hoyt Library
505 Janes Avenue

Draft Minutes

Tuesday, July 28, 2026

I. **Call to Order** – Commissioner LaMarr called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. **Roll Call** – Staff McEmber took roll.

Present: John Milne, Carla LaMarr, Yolanda Bland, Floyd Kloc, Tobias Young Rachel Weidinger, and Brenda Moore

Absent: Jack Nash.

Staff: City Attorney Amy Lusk, Christina McEmber, and Abbey Alverson

III. **Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Bland, to approve the meeting minutes for the June 23, 2026, meeting. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. Motion approved.

IV. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Milne, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to approve the agenda. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. Motion approved.

Commissioner Charlene Orange entered the meeting at 6:03 pm.

V. **Public Comment** - Chair LaMarr opened the floor for public comment.

- Gregory Willis, 625 Westchester Road, encouraged the Planning Commission to deny the special land use application for a proposed fueling station located at 1313 Cumberland Street.

Chair LaMarr called for public comment two additional times. No further comment was made.

IX. **New Business**

- a. **(J26-2872) Special Land Use – Convenience Store and Vehicle Fueling Station 1313 Cumberland and 2818 E Holland Avenue.** Chair LaMarr opened the public hearing for comment. Randy Hannah, Project Manager representing Yatooma Oil presented on behalf of the property owner, explaining that Yatooma Oil is a family-owned company providing financing and operational assistance for fuel systems to help revitalize the existing business site by adding four fuel pumps.

Public Comment - Chair LaMarr called for additional comment.

- Nick Bauer, Engineer representing Stonefield Engineering & Design, detailed the site plan specifications, noting that the property is zoned L1 Light Industrial, access will be restricted to a single driveway on Cumberland Street per MDOT requirements, 32 parking spaces (2 ADA) and 2 bicycle spaces are provided, and a 6-foot masonry dumpster enclosure will replace the current unscreened setup near the sidewalk, which will require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. A traffic impact study was completed confirming that the addition of the fueling station will not generate a significant increase in traffic. Bauer also states that the store will not be renovated and will operate at the same capacity as it does today.
- Owner, 2440 Phoenix Street, expressed concerns regarding violence and lack of landscaping upkeep on the property at 1313 Cumberland, currently. She also argued that the neighborhood needs positive community investments like parks or grocery stores rather than another gas station or liquor store.
- Sheray Mills, 1210 Genei Court, spoke against the project, pointing out the lack of local grocery stores and parks, and suggesting alternative uses for the lot such as a mini grocery store, family restaurant, or community space instead of placing a gas

- station near already existing fueling stations.
- Gregory Willis, 625 Westchester Road, re-emphasized concerns regarding safety, a lack of community support from the business owner, and issues with bottle returns and loitering.

Chair LaMarr called for additional comment two times. No further comment was made.

Motion by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Kloc, to close the public hearing. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. Motion approved.

Motion by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Young, to approve the proposed site plan and issue a special land use permit for proposed vehicle fueling station at 1313 Cumberland and 2818 E Holland Avenue.

Motion by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Young, to go out of regular order to ask the petitioner questions. 8 ayes. 0 nays. 1 absent. Motion approved.

Commissioner Young expressed that this project would cause a bottleneck in the traffic on Cumberland Avenue and also raised concern regarding the blight that's currently on the property.

Commissioner Mline discussed site plan deficiencies, lack of storage space, pointing out that pumps will not be visible from store and questions legality. Mr. Hannah stated that there will be video surveillance to monitor fuel pumps, meeting legal guidelines. Commissioner Mline argued that application is incomplete as it does not include detailed site plan.

Staff McEmber stated site plan was submitted by applicant but was not included in the document provided to the Commission. Staff stated Commission may postpone vote until further review.

Commissioner Bland asked if there will be any improvement to the building on the property currently. Mr. Hannah stated that there will be improvements to the site to comply with Yatooma Oil branding requirements. Mr. Bauer stated that several shrubs, a tree, and landscaping islands will be added to enhance the site's overall appearance. Additionally, it was noted that Yatooma ensures compliance by sending "secret shoppers" to routinely monitor its storefronts.

Commissioner Kloc probed the conditional requirements necessary for approving special land use.

Commissioner Moore questioned the location of the property, petroleum tank placement, and perceived lack of site improvement.

Commissioner Orange asked that the owner of the business at 1313 Cumberland, be present at the next opportunity to review special land use application (J26-2872).

Chair Lamarr called for accountability from the business owner, noting that an unwillingness to address community concerns raises red flags regarding the long-term success of the business.

Commissioner Kloc stated that he believes the Commission has received enough information to vote on the special land use application (J26-2872).

Motion by Commissioner Kloc, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go back to regular order. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. Motion approved.

Commissioner Kloc stated that, in accordance with ordinance requirements, the commission must deny the special land use application because the ordinance provides that such use shall not be granted unless it is necessary for public convenience at that specific location. He further noted that there are already multiple fueling stations in close proximity it unnecessary.

Commissioner Moore asked Staff if notices were sent to surrounding properties for public hearing. Staff McEmber confirmed notices were sent out and that no communication had been received from the public concerning special land use application (J26-2872) prior to public hearing.

Commissioner Bland inquired whether the Traffic Engineering Department had been contacted regarding potential traffic bottlenecks caused by the project. Staff McEmber explained that because the property is situated along M-46, final review was deferred to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), which recommended consolidating access to a single entrance and exit on Cumberland Avenue.

Chair LaMarr stated that she agreed with Commissioner Kloc, noting that the project does not provide public convenience. She then opened the floor for additional comments. No further comment was made.

Original motion to approve the site plan and issue of special use permit was considered.

Roll Call Vote:

Floyd Kloc – No

John Milne – No

Charlene Orange – No

Tobias Young – No

Carla Lamarr - No

Yolanda Bland - No

Brenda Moore - No

Rachel Weidinger - No

0 ayes, 8 nays, 1 absent. Motion denied.

- b. Harrison Manor Update (For Informational Purposes)** - Staff McEmber provided an update regarding a proposed senior complex on Benjamin Street. The developer did not receive their MSHDA grant and is re-evaluating site scoring options with Saginaw Future. No commission action was required. Chair Lamarr asked if staff has confirmed that developer has contacted Saginaw Future. Staff could not confirm.

IX. Old Business

- a. Proposed Data Center Zoning Ordinance Discussion** - Chair LaMarr opened the hearing for public comment. City Attorney Lusk explained that city staff were tasked with creating an ordinance pertaining to the siting and operation of data centers within the City of Saginaw. Over several months, City staff conducted extensive research to draft an ordinance tailored to the city's best interests. Attorney Lusk requested that, following the closure of the public hearing, the Planning Commission recommend adoption of the proposed data center ordinance to the City Council.

Chair LaMarr called for additional public comment.

- Jeff Bull, 2634 Graham Place, as a representative of Saginaw CAP, Mr. Bull expressed concern regarding regulations on data center utility usage and the potential environmental and economic costs to the community. He also raised questions regarding the proposed zoning districts where data centers would be permitted as a special land use.
- Sarah Doran, Saginaw Township Resident, spoke about the environmental concerns associated with data centers emphasizing the need to weigh potential benefits against significant negative outcomes.
- Carrie Taylor, 2015 Mershon Street, expressed disapproval of data centers within the City of Saginaw, stating that the city should prioritize the environment by preserving natural resources for community members rather than accommodating data centers.
- Nathan Gaffney, 5983 Weiss Apartment M, expressed concerns regarding the cost of violations in comparison to the substantial amounts of revenue tech companies generate annually. It was also suggested that reporting frequency be increased to more than once a year, conducting sound studies during peak operational hours, and actively monitoring air pollution and other environmental impacts, as well as extending the timeline between public hearings.
- Staff McEmber shared a public comment suggesting that the former GM Malleable Iron plant property would be an optimal site for a data center, noting that its proximity to the

river and existing contamination would likely deter other types of development.

- Sheray Mills, 1210 Genei Court, reiterated the need for local grocery stores, parks, and community spaces.

Chair LaMarr called for public comment two additional times. No further comment was made.

Motion by Commissioner Kloc, seconded by Commissioner Milne, to close the public hearing. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. Motion approved.

Motion by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Milne, to recommend the adoption of proposed Data Center Ordinance by the City Council.

Commissioner Kloc raised concerns regarding waste disposal, surety bonding, and requirements for returning the site to its previous use. Attorney Lusk responded that data centers will only be permitted as a special land use within industrially zoned areas.

Commissioner Moore questioned federal or state laws surrounding data centers.

Commissioner Milne asked what would occur if the current moratorium were to expire. Attorney Lusk stated that, absent the ordinance, data centers would default to being considered a standard industrial land use; adopting the proposed ordinance would instead require applicants to obtain approval as a special land use and comply with all specific standards outlined within the new regulations.

Original motion to recommend the adoption of proposed Data Center Ordinance by the City Council was considered. **8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. Motion approved.**

IX. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Weidinger to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. Motion approved.

Chair LaMarr adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Abbey Alverson,
Community Engagement Coordinator



City of Saginaw Planning Commission Agenda Item Communication

Date of Meeting: August 25, 2026

Case Number: J26-2879

Brief Description: Special Land Use Approval for a public utility
at 305 S 18th Street

Written By: Christina McEmber

Request: Consumers Energy is submitting a special land use approval application for rebuilding a natural gas regulator station, including a new 234 square foot building and new above grade equipment and below grade piping at 305 S 18th Street (Parcel ID: 21 0025 00000). The applicant is requesting a landscaping and screening waiver.

Property Information:

Property Address	305 S. 18 th Street
Parcel ID	21 0025 00000
Location	Corner of Janes Avenue and S 18 th Street
Area	0.292 acres
Existing Zoning	Low Density Residential (R-1)
Existing Land Use	Public Utility
Future Land Use Map	Residential

	North	East	South	West
Surrounding Zoning	Medium Density Residential (R-2)	Low Density Residential (R-1)	Low Density Residential (R-1)	Low Density Residential (R-1)
Surrounding Land Uses	Vacant Land	Single-family houses	Railroad Tracks	Railroad Tracks
Future Land Use Map	Residential	Residential	Residential	Residential

Public Comments: As of August 17, 2026, no public comments have been received.

Zoning Board of Appeals Variance Approval: On August 5, 2026, the Zoning Board of Appeals approved a front yard setback variance of 17 feet instead of the required 20 feet since the size of the lot and location of the sewer on the property restricts where the building can be located, the utility will be updated without any service interruptions, and the utility updates will increase public safety.

Project Description:

A special land use approval has been submitted for a public utility at 305 S 18th Street (Parcel ID: 21 0025 00000). The applicant is proposing to upgrade the existing equipment through the construction of a new 234 square foot building that will house natural gas equipment to protect it from the elements. The building will not be connected to water or sewer. The building will be accessed from 18th Street.

Section 153-6.1(C)(5) of the City of Saginaw Zoning Ordinance states *To ensure that buildings, open space, and landscaping will be in harmony with other structures and improvements in the area, and that no undesirable health, safety, noise, and traffic conditions will result from the development, the Planning Commission shall determine whether the site plan meets the following criteria:*

1. The vehicular transportation system shall provide for circulation throughout the site and for efficient ingress and egress to all parts of the site by fire and safety equipment.

A single driveway on S 18th Street will provide ingress and egress to the site. There will be an aggregate drive along the east side of the site.

2. Pedestrian walkways shall be provided as deemed necessary by the Planning Commission for separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

No pedestrians should be on the property.

3. The site plan shall comply with the district requirements for minimum floor space, height of building, lot size, yard space, density, and all other requirements as set forth in this chapter.

The property is an irregular shape and has a nonconforming lot area of 12,719 square feet (required minimum lot area: 6,000 square feet) and the width varies with the largest width being about 92 square feet (required minimum lot width 60 feet). The building will be approximately 9 feet tall, which is less than the maximum building height requirement of 35 feet.

4. The requirements for landscaping, greenbelts, fencing, walls, and other protective barriers shall be complied with as provided in this chapter.

The applicant is seeking a waiver from the landscaping and screening section of the zoning ordinance. The applicant would like a waiver for Section 153-5.5 Landscaping and Screening (no major screening buffers of either two continuous rows of evergreen trees, a berm, or an obscuring wall or privacy fence. The existing chain link fence around the site will remain.

Per Section 153-5.5(C), *When an existing site is undergoing improvement prompting site plan review, the objective of these standards shall be to gradually bring the site into compliance with the minimum standards of this section in proportion to the extent of the expansion or improvement. For example: 1. A parking lot's proposed reconstruction should involve compliance with the parking lot screening and parking lot landscaping standards.*

Per Section 153-5.5(H) Existing Vegetation, *In making their decision, the approving authority may require the applicant provide documentation, such as a tree survey or photographs.*

Section 153-5.5(J)(2) states *The Planning Commission may approve a reduction of this minimum width or an alternative to street frontage landscaping wherever it makes a finding that reduced building setbacks in the applicable zoning district make a full ten (10) foot landscape area impractical, or that reducing the width of the landscape area will not adversely impact landscape health and longevity. If street frontage landscaping is waived by the Planning Commission, it may require street trees be placed within the adjacent street right-of-way, subject to the approval of the authority having jurisdiction over the street right-of-way.*

Section 153-5.5(O) states *The Planning Commission may approve a reduction of the minimum requirements in this section wherever it makes a finding on all of the criteria below:*

- a) That the characteristics of the site make full compliance with the standards impractical due to unique site conditions; and***
 - b) The waiver or reduction request is the minimum request necessary; and***
 - c) That reducing the amount of required landscaping will not adversely impact adjacent parcels and is in keeping with the spirit and intent of this chapter.***
5. The site plan shall provide for adequate storage space for the use therein.

The applicant will not be storing items on site.

6. The site plan shall comply with all requirements of the applicable zoning district, unless otherwise provided in this chapter.

The site plan generally meets the requirements in the zoning ordinance. The applicant is requesting a waiver from the Planning Commission for the landscaping and screening.

Section 153-6.3(F) of the City of Saginaw Zoning Ordinance states *no special land use shall be granted by the Planning Commission unless the special land use:*

1. *Will reasonably promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner for those persons who will use the proposed land use or activity; for those landowners and residents who are adjacent; and for the City as a whole;*

The proposed project intends to update the building and equipment on the property to provide safe and reliable service to area businesses and residences. Due to the property's irregular shape and a sewer line that traverses the property, the location of the building is restricted. A variance was sought and approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals for the front yard setback.

2. *Is necessary for the public convenience at that location;*

Yes, the utility provides natural gas to the area businesses and residences.

3. *Is compatible with adjacent uses of land;*

Yes, the site currently operates as a public utility. The proposed project intends to update the structure and equipment on the property.

4. *Is so designed, located, and proposed to be operated that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected;*

Yes, the rebuild and modernization of the site will meet federal, state, and local regulations. The site will be compliant with the Michigan Public Service Commission's regulations. Due to the irregularity of the site and the easement around the sewer, the applicant has designed the site to maximize its use, while obtaining the minimal amount of variances necessary.

5. *Can be adequately served by public services and facilities without diminishing or adversely affecting public services and facilities to existing land uses in the area;*

The proposed project expects to update the existing public utility facilities and infrastructure and is not expected to diminish or adversely affect usage (e.g. service interruptions).

6. *Will reasonably protect the natural environment and help conserve natural resources and energy;*

The proposed project will meet current energy regulations. There are no significant natural resources on the property. The site will be graded to manage stormwater efficiently. The applicant has requested a waiver from the Planning Commission for the landscaping and screening requirement.

7. *Will not intensify a performance standard such as noise, light, odor, or a similar element, unless significant mitigation to such standards are proposed and demonstrated in the building and/or site design;*

The development is not expected to intensify noise, light, or odors in the area due to the nature of the project upgrades. Lighting will remain on site.

8. *Will not create dangerous or adverse impacts to the transportation network, considering the safety for pedestrian, bicycle, nonmotorized, and vehicular traffic;*

The existing driveway off of 18th Street will provide ingress and egress to the site. The site does not have pedestrian access.

9. *Proposes a reasonable effort to resolve nonconformities if nonconformities are present;*

Yes, the applicant has obtained a front yard setback variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals and a sewer easement variance from the City of Saginaw Department of Public Services.

10. *Is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable regulations of the zoning district in which it is to be located, and meets applicable standards of this chapter;*

Yes, the site is in the Low Density Residential (R-1) Zoning District, which permits public utilities as a special land use. The project generally meets the regulations specified in the zoning ordinance except for the requested waiver of the landscaping and screening requirement and the variances already obtained from the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Department of Public Services.

11. *Is related to the valid exercise of the City's police power and purposes which are affected by the proposed use or activity.*

The proposed public utility project will upgrade the site's existing facilities to provide natural gas to businesses and residents. The site has been designed to meet the regulations in the zoning ordinance with the exception of the waiver for the landscaping and screening and the obtained front yard setback variance.

Recommended Conditions for Approval:

1. The Department of Public Services reviews and approves the civil plans and the sidewalk work within the right-of-way.
2. All other necessary approvals and permits are obtained from all local, county, and state agencies.

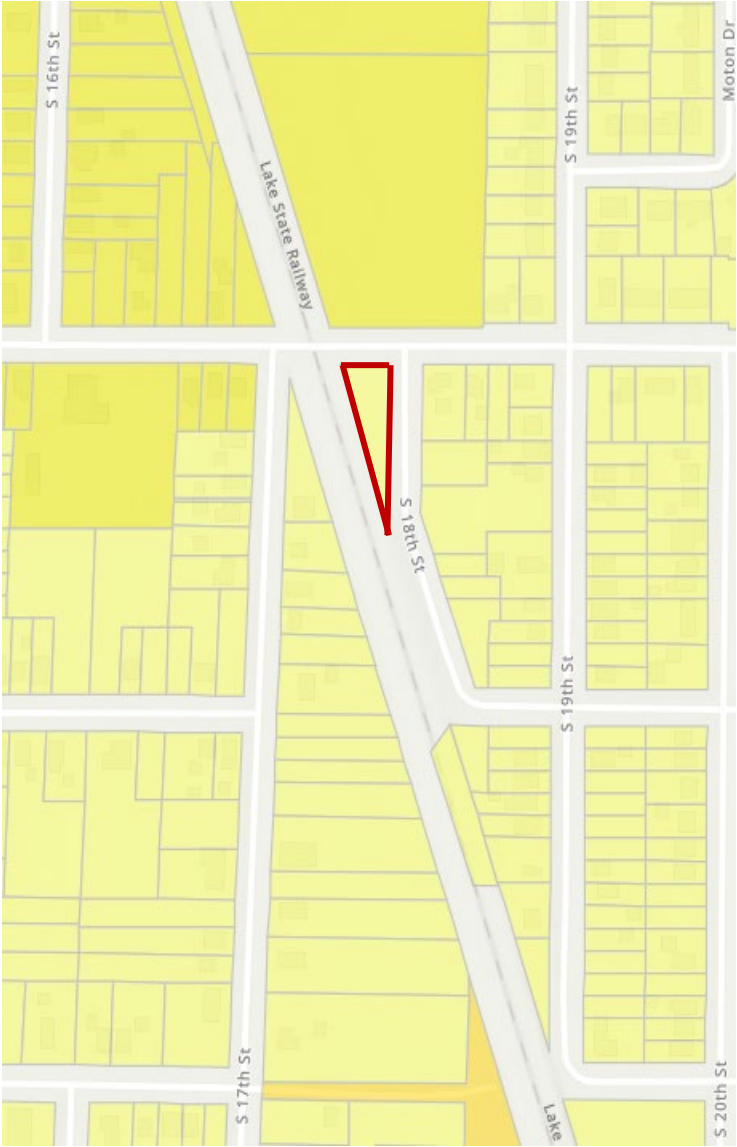
Location Map

 Property Location



Zoning Map

 Property Location



Pictures



Subject property and west side of property



East side of subject property



South side of subject property



Subject property