



**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2025, 5:30 P.M.
ADA TOWNSHIP OFFICE, ASSEMBLY HALL
7330 THORNAPPLE RIVER DR SE, ADA, MI**

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 12, 2025, REGULAR MEETING**
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 24, 2025, SPECIAL MEETING**
- VI. PUBLIC HEARING**
 - 1. Request for Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments to allow commercial recreational facilities in the I Industrial and LI Light Industrial zoning districts, and to establish corresponding parking provisions for such uses, Spark 43 Architects, LLC
- VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none**
- VIII. NEW BUSINESS - none**
- IX. COMMISSION MEMBER / STAFF REPORTS**
- X. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- XI. ADJOURNMENT**



**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING JUNE 12, 2025, REGULAR MEETING**

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., at the Ada Township Hall, 7330 Thornapple River Drive, Ada, Michigan.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair VanderVennen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Butterfield, Carter, Ellixson-Andrews, Kluting, Moyer, VanderVennen

Members Absent: Cooper-Surma

Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Said

Others Present: 7 members of the public

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Moyer, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 15, 2025, REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Moyer, supported by Carter, to approve the May 15, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

V. PUBLIC HEARING - none

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Request for Site Plan Review to allow for an accessory building in the front yard; RP-2 zoning district, applicant & property owner Andrea Arnold, 2474 Grand River Drive NE, Parcel No. 41-15-07-100-041

Andrea Arnold, applicant, presented her request for an accessory building to allow for additional storage space for garage overflow. She described the location of the accessory building and said it is the only possible area for the building due to sloping and erosion and referred to the pictures in the packet showing that the building matches the appearance of the home and that it is barely visible from the road. Ms. Arnold further explained that the accessory building was constructed without Township zoning approval, but she was not aware that was required, so she reached out to Planning and Zoning Staff for proper application review.

Zoning Administrator/Planner Bajdek summarized the Staff Report and said the applicant is seeking site plan approval to allow a 200 sq. ft. accessory structure in the front yard on the northwestern

corner of the property. Bajdek noted that the onsite placement of the structure at 29 feet from the front property line and 32 feet from side property line do not satisfy the required 50-foot front and side yard setback requirements; a request for variances has been submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) from the subject setbacks and is scheduled to be heard at their July 1, 2025 meeting. The building meets all other dimensional requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Bajdek said the building was constructed without the Township zoning approval, though a building permit is not required for buildings 200 sq. ft. or less. Bajdek concluded that given the applicable standards for site plan review, Staff has no objections to approval of the proposed accessory building, based on the request meets the applicable site plan review standards, and subject to the required front and side yard setback variances being granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

VanderVennen opened the public hearing at 5:38 p.m.

Mike Peskin, 2510 Grand River Dr., lives north of the applicant, said that he was at the meeting to object to the proposed accessory building but realizes the objection is not related to the Planning Commission's process and will attend the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on July 1 to object to the variance request.

VanderVennen closed the public hearing at 5:40 p.m.

There was Commissioner discussion regarding the existing tree coverage of the accessory building, concern was mentioned about exterior storage outside of the building, and Staff went over clarification on the procedure process for the ZBA variances.

Moved by Ellixson-Andrews, supported by Carter, to approve the proposed accessory building, based on the findings of fact that the request meets the applicable plan review standards, and subject to the required front and side yard setback variances being granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Motion carried.

2. Request for Final PUD (Planned Unit Development) approval for a commercial warehouse/storage facility; I Industrial zoning district, The Caves LLC, Tom Reed, 4900 and 4920 Fulton Street East, Parcel Nos. 41-15-30-300-019 and 41-15-30-300-020

Tom Reed, applicant and owner of The Caves, gave a summary on the PUD process he has pursued for the past couple years. Mr. Reed requested review and approval of the Final PUD, which includes the building, building layouts, the setback issues, the parking, and the use. He noted the agreement received from the Township regarding the water and sewer service and that condition of approval #7 should be removed from the final approval.

Planning Director Said went over the items addressed previously during the preliminary PUD process (building layout, setbacks, engineering plans). Said summarized that the applicant requests final approval of a PUD for this site with an expansion to include new buildings, revisions to previously-approved buildings, related site changes, and to unify the adjacent parcel at 4900 Fulton (former Anderson site) with the preexisting property, 4920 Fulton, to a unified development area.

Said noted items for Planning Commission review and reiterated that the outdoor trailer parking/storage area must be paved, per Township Ordinance. Said also noted the Township

Board agreement (documented via a Township Resolution) that Mr. Reed's project would not be required to connect to the municipal sewer. He said that Staff has no objections to the final approval of this request based on the applicable standards.

There was Commissioner discussion regarding condition of approval on stormwater and the clarity on the language on condition #2 (allowed uses vs. prohibited uses), and the Commissioners concurred that the existing landscape as proposed is acceptable.

Moved by Carter, supported by Moyer, to approve the Final PUD, based on findings of fact that the request is consistent with the preliminary PUD and the applicable PUD Standards, and based on the following conditions of approval (as discussed in this meeting):

1. The approved PUD Plan shall be carried out in substantial conformance with the plans prepared by Callen Engineering, Inc., as follows:
 - Existing Conditions Plan, dated 03-13-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc.;
 - Site Plan and Grading, Drainage, and SESC Plan, both dated 05-06-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc.;
 - Cross Sections, Notes, and Details Plan; dated 03-13-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc.
 - Landscape Plan, dated 05-06-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc.
2. The following use restrictions shall apply to this PUD:

The following uses, and no others, are allowed in this PUD:

- a. Light assembly, Light or small-scale fabrication with on-site staff/worker presence of no more than 3 people per unit. Light fabrication to be assembly/conversion/manufacture of already processed raw materials into products, where the operation aspects of these processes and the materials to be used will not cause impacts on surrounding areas or the community overall. Examples include, but not be limited to artisan/craft products, clothing and fabrics, furniture and fixtures, cabinetry, media production, printing/publishing and the like. This limitation shall not apply to the building at 4900 Fulton.
- b. Contractor offices/workshops, with on-site staff/worker presence of no more than 3 people per unit. This limitation shall not apply to the building at 4900 Fulton.
- c. Indoor storage and self-storage.
- d. Outdoor trailer storage in designated areas only as shown on approved site plan.
- e. Research and testing.
- f. Wholesale/Distribution type business with no retail.

The following uses are specifically prohibited in this PUD:

- a. Production, sales, storage, or distribution of any food or beverage products.

- b. Engine/automotive/vehicular service, repair, of any kind.
- c. Manufacturing or anything beyond light or small-scale Fabrication, of any kind.
- d. Uses that require water usage as part of assembly activities.
- e. On-site retail sales of any kind.
- f. Outdoor storage of any materials, etc.
- g. Vehicle fleet storage, maintenance and fueling facilities.
- h. Churches.
- i. Day care centers.
- j. Public and private use heliports.
- k. Antenna towers and masts for cellular phone and other personal communications services.

The Township, through its Zoning Administrator, reserves the right to review and any proposed uses not specifically identified in the I District or in the categories noted herein, and either approve or deny such uses based on consistency with the PUD. The applicant, and/or the Zoning Administrator, may refer such proposals to the Planning Commission to approve or deny the request based on consistency with the PUD.

- 3. Prior to the issuance of any permit, the applicant shall obtain a stormwater permit from the Township, and shall obtain Township Engineer approval of the proposed stormwater plan.
- 4. Permits for on-site potable well and on-site waste disposal system shall be issued by the Kent County Health Department, prior to issuance of any building permits.
- 5. Building wall-mounted exterior lighting shall be limited to one fixture per unit service entry door, plus one additional fixture per building at a location determined by the applicant, with the exception that no fixtures shall be installed along the east wall of buildings along the east edge of the property. All fixtures, whether wall-mounted on buildings or freestanding, shall be full horizontal cutoff fixtures mounted in a vertical downward position. No light shall spill over onto adjacent properties.
- 6. Prior to the issuance of any permits, the applicant shall complete a lot combination request to merge 4900 and 4920 Fulton.
- 7. No signs are approved with this request.

Motion carried.

3. PVM District Development Plan Amendment with Departures (request to change a previous condition of approval); C1/PVM zoning district, applicant Outdoor Lighting Perspectives, property owner Salhadar Holdings LLC, 7210 Headley Street SE, Parcel No. 41-15-34-101-042

Rob Clark, applicant with Outdoor Lighting Perspectives, 5241 Plainfield Ave., also 221 Dogwood Ave., presented the request for a change in the lighting style. Mr. Clark said the type of lighting they work with is architectural up lighting. He explained the reason they prefer that type of lighting is that you see the affect, the building, the architecture, and you don't see the source. He said that on a lot of modern commercial and residential buildings, your eye is drawn to the source of the light and not to the building itself and with such a beautiful building as Dr. Samy's, they want to showcase that.

Mr. Clark listed other buildings in Ada that have this type of lighting and that it is low voltage, landscape style lighting and is in compliance with all dark skies restrictions and limitations. He said they would like to use the lighting on the building to enhance the architecture.

Said stated that this request is a change to a previous condition of approval for this project, along with a departure from the PVM Overlay District requirements for lighting. The condition of approval, regarding lighting, was included with the previously approved PVM Development Plan for the subject site.

Said explained that the applicant requests that condition of approval 2.e., which reads as follows, be omitted from the approval: "The applicant shall provide lighting plans consistent with applicable requirements and shall obtain Township Staff approval prior to the issuance of any building permit. All exterior light fixtures, both building-mounted and pole-mounted, shall be full-cutoff to control light emission, and subject to approval by Township Staff prior to issuance of a building permit."

Said noted that this request also necessitates a request for a departure from the applicable PVM Standards, which states the following: "Floodlighting shall not be used to illuminate building walls (i.e., no up-lighting)."

Said stated these requests are not consistent with the overall spirit and intent of the PVM Overlay District requirements. Per the applicant's request, the uplighting is being requested to highlight the building's appearance and to emphasize the business sign, yet no other building in the PVM Overlay District has a similar arrangement. Staff believes that approval of this application could set a poor precedent for future such requests and in conclusion, Staff does not support the request.

There was Commissioner discussion regarding the current lighting at the Library and other sites in the PVM Overlay District, an explanation was received from Mr. Clark regarding the change in lighting (fixture projection on LED vs. halogen bulbs), and the Commissioners concurred that it may be a good idea to review/reconsider the PVM Standards for future projects.

Bajdek referenced the other lighting option; full cutoff, low intensity lighting. Carter mentioned concern with all the time and efforts that went into develop the PVM Standards. Kluting noted that the PVM language specifically says no uplighting (since 2011). VanderVennen stated though the lighting does look nice, he feels his job as a Planning Commissioner is to uphold the laws of the Township.

VanderVennen opened the public hearing at 6:28 p.m.

Marie Clark, 221 Dogwood, said she understands the rules and the reason why boundaries/standards are put in place; however, the effect of the proposed lighting is so classy and beautiful and will offer the community a safe and well-lit environment.

VanderVennen closed the public hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Moved by Carter, supported by Kluting, to deny the request for change in lighting, based on the findings of fact that the request is not consistent with the applicable criteria. Motion carried.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER / STAFF REPORTS

Said updated that there is a Special Meeting scheduled for the Planning Commission on June 24, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. to review the proposals received (presentations from consultants) regarding the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite. The next scheduled Regular Planning Commission meeting is on July 17, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Peskin, 2510 Grand River Dr., suggested the Township offer a hearing loop, which loops into a hearing aid (for hearing impaired) for future meetings. Said noted he will investigate hearing loop accommodations.

Mr. Peskin inquired about the public meeting with the Kent County Drain Commission regarding Ada Township. Said explained the history and purpose for the public meeting and said the meeting on May 29th was handled at the Township Board level, not the Planning Commission level. Commissioner Carter (Township Board Trustee) said he was at the meeting on May 29th and would be happy to discuss with Mr. Peskin after the Planning Commission meeting adjourned.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Kluting, supported by Carter, to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo DeMarco, Ada Township Clerk

rs:eb



**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING JUNE 24, 2025, SPECIAL MEETING**

DRAFT

A special meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., at the Ada Township Hall, 7330 Thornapple River Drive, Ada, Michigan.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair VanderVennen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Butterfield, Carter, Cooper-Surma, Ellixson-Andrews, Kluting, Moyer, VanderVennen

Members Absent: 0

Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Said

Others Present: 4

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Moyer, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Zoning Ordinance Update – Proposal Reviews/Interviews

a. McKenna

Hunter Whitehill presented McKenna's proposal. He introduced the project team and their qualifications, and he referenced the other community names that McKenna has worked on zoning ordinances for (in western Michigan).

Hunter went over the project timeline; project initiation in July, full draft for review in November, revisions and input, with proposed Township Board adoption by March, 2026. He said McKenna understands what Ada Township is looking for. McKenna's goal is to make the Zoning Ordinance transparent and efficient, create a product that benefits all future Zoning Ordinance users, and make appropriate adjustments for recommendations from the 2023 Master Plan.

Referring to the graphics/charts included in the presentation, Hunter explained details on the reorganization process with sections of the Zoning Ordinance and each district showing (proposed organization vs. existing), transparency and efficiency (existing uses/proposed uses), permitted land use charts, a schedule of regulations table (showing max. & mins. in lot size, area, height, width, etc.), and a Zoning District Summary chart (everything you need to see is on one page).

Hunter concluded with questions for the Township to consider; will the Zoning Ordinance stay in Municode, are there parts of the Ordinance don't want to change, and parts that definitely need to be changed.

There was a question-and-answer session amongst the Commissioners, Planning Staff and candidate regarding the scope of the project; public engagement strategies and how they are handled, and experience with other communities. In response to concerns on ensuring the drafts reviewed are legible/editable, and the consultants process if a team member leaves during the project (Township at risk of timeline, budget, etc.), it was noted that the proposal is a fixed cost, even though project team members and their specific responsibilities (content editor, graphic artists, team leader) were identified. There was also a concern mentioned that Hunter is not on the list as part of the project team.

VanderVennen inquired whether McKenna was aware of the Ada budget for the project. Hunter responded that he was not aware of Ada's budgeted amount but noted the proposal may be modified/edited for cost.

Ellixson-Andrews asked what the most challenging part of the project is and what makes McKenna the most qualified. Hunter responded that the most difficult part of a Zoning Ordinance is to think about it in its entirety and not in pieces. Hunter said that McKenna's experience is what makes them most qualified.

Carter asked for an example how McKenna handles a problem during a public engagement session. Hunter responded that people that are against something show up more than people that are for something, but they need to be heard, and that we need to listen to what people have to say.

Q&A concluded at 5:35 p.m.

b. Progressive Companies

Julie Tschirhart and Jaclyn Walker, Planners with Progressive Companies, presented their proposal. Julie shared the reasons why to choose Progressive for the Zoning Ordinance Update; history and familiarity with Ada Township (worked with Ada on Envision Ada in 2013, Connect Ada in 2020 and most recently the Master Plan in 2023), leaders in zoning strategy, prioritized and customized process, and working with their experienced multi-disciplinary team. Julie said that Progressive brings a breadth of knowledge in terms of zoning strategies, pointing out that their team being active in both state and national levels. She noted from the RFP that a big priority of Ada is translating zoning concepts and turning into a more straightforward language, as well as expanding housing choices and supply.

Jaclyn noted the familiarity Progressive has with Ada and their involvement with the previous projects. She said that Progressive's involvement with the Master Plan will directly guide them with the Zoning Ordinance Update. She noted that Progressive has attorneys on staff (including herself) and it's helpful in terms of translating legalese into normal everyday language. She went over details on Progressive's prioritize process; understand local plans and experience, zoning audit, update ordinance deliberately, to the adoption. She went over the project timeline; kickoff in July, review zone districts, maps, uses, definitions, review new chapters & edits, with document review by September, and final draft/adoption in January-March.

Julie concluded their presentation with introducing the Progressive multi-disciplinary team and

their backgrounds. She added that Ada has created a firm foundation for what is started, and they look forward to working with Ada on the Zoning Ordinance Update.

There was a question-and-answer session amongst the Commissioners, Planning Staff and candidates regarding the scope of the project; inquiry was made about the number of community engagements required compared to the Master Plan (at most two-Progressive believes more engagement is building trust), there was a concern on ensuring the drafts reviewed are legible/editable, meeting the Ada budget amount for the project, how often feedback is received during the project timeline, and identified project team members and their specific responsibilities (content editor, graphic artists, team leader).

Cooper-Surma asked what Progressive's biggest risk is. Jaclyn responded that she thinks the biggest risk is not meeting the objective by not systematically working through the document and not having enough feedback going through the process. She said Progressive has a great knowledge of the best practices in the nation, with the tools at their hands and understanding how to use them, so at the end of the day, there is a very limited amount of risk.

VanderVennen inquired whether Progressive is aware of the extended work already done by the Planning Staff and the Ada budgeted amount. Said confirmed that the RFP provided strong bullet points that stressed the amount of involvement the Planning Staff provided (the framework) and that both consultants are coming into the project with eyes wide open and aware of everything, including setting up the program and Ada's budget.

Q&A concluded at 6:14 p.m.

2. Commission Discussion/Recommendation

Said stated the desired goal tonight is to have the Planning Commission carefully consider both proposals and upon conclusion make a recommendation of one consultant to the Township Board for final approval at the July 14th board meeting.

There was extended Planning Commission discussion regarding; the consideration of the items that were specifically called out/requested in the RFP, cost/budget (Grant fund received for \$50,000 with no funds budgeted from the Township), staying within the timeframe/timeline, McKenna's thorough and perceptible presentation though justifying higher cost, consideration of Progressive's work done on the Master Plan, the project benefiting from an attorney on the project team, and overall presentation comparisons.

VanderVennen stated we have two great consulting firms, however, one cost is significantly more than the other. Carter inquired to Staffs perspective. Said stated if the Commission selects the higher bid, the challenge is justifying the cost difference to the Township Board, which would require Township funds.

Carter made note that his daughter-in-law works for Progressive Companies. He assured the Commissioners he would be fair and unbiased on the subject matter, and the Commission agreed that no conflict of interest exists.

Discussion concluded as the Commissioners compared the two consultants noting that both

proposals effectively address the items requested for the project and the Planning Commission's desired outcome.

VanderVennen moved to the Commissioners for a recommendation.

Moved by Carter, supported by Kluting, to recommend to the Township Board, approval of Progressive Companies for the consulting firm for the Ada Township Zoning Ordinance Update. Motion carried unanimously.

Carter left the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER / STAFF REPORTS

Said confirmed that the next Planning Commission meeting is on July 17, 2025, and there is one item on the agenda, a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

X. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ellixson-Andrews, supported by Cooper-Surma, to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo DeMarco, Ada Township Clerk

rs:eb



MEMORANDUM

Date: 07.10.25

TO: Ada Township Planning Commission
FROM: Department of Planning
RE: **July 17, 2025 – Text Amendments – Commercial Recreational Facilities as Special Uses in the I Industrial and LI Light Industrial Zoning Districts, and Corresponding Parking Requirements – Spark 43 Architects, LLC**

Request Overview

Request by Spark 43 Architects LLC for text amendments to Sections 78-382 (I Industrial Use Regulations) and 78-413 (LI Light Industrial Special land uses) to allow Commercial Recreational Facilities as special uses, and to Section 78-788 (Schedule of off-street parking requirements) for corresponding parking specifications for these uses.

Background

Uses

The applicant desires to amend the Township Zoning Ordinance to add these uses, which would include both indoor and outdoor facilities, to the I and LI Districts. Such uses could encompass smaller-scale (and typically indoor) uses, such as fitness studios, gyms, and golf simulation facilities, as well as larger-scale (both indoor and outdoor) uses such as racquet/paddle sport courts, swimming pools, bowling alleys, ice arenas, basketball courts, and athletic fields (such as soccer and lacrosse).

Zoning Districts

Currently, the Ada Township Zoning Ordinances allows "Commercial recreation facilities such as bowling lanes, indoor theaters, skating rinks or racquet clubs." as permitted uses in the C-2 General Business District (Sec. 78-362), and within approved residential Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) "...golf courses, country clubs, parks, playgrounds, and indoor recreation facilities such as racquet clubs and swimming pools" (Sec. 78-448).

Current Parking Requirements

Sec. 78-788 of the Zoning Ordinance currently specifies that "Indoor commercial recreational establishments" require 1 parking space "per 3 persons allowed within maximum occupancy permitted by building code".

The upcoming Zoning Ordinance Update will provide an opportunity to standardize language, and, to the extent possible with zoning districts, establish consistent requirements for uses (including recreational uses).

Analysis

Proposed Use

Staff has no objections to amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow commercial recreational facilities as special uses in the LI and I districts. Many other communities allow such uses, and their size and scale would make sense in these areas. As well, the special use standards that apply to any such requests would allow for a more detailed review and approval process.

Parking

Proposed parking is a more challenging topic to address within the Zoning Ordinance. Staff is not comfortable with area-based ratios, such as x spaces per 1,000 square feet, as these can result in very inaccurate requirements for recreational uses. For example, if a soccer field is 45,000 square feet (less than regulation size, but usable for discussion purposes), and the parking required is 3 spaces/1,000 square feet, that would necessitate a minimum parking requirement of 135 spaces. This would seem excessive for most recreational uses, as it would not be the same as a use such as a collegiate or professional sports facility. At the same time, tournament usage and similar high-volume activities also necessitate consideration.

In any case, Staff believes that there is more precision/accuracy with utilization of occupancy-based usage. The applicant's proposed language is somewhat detailed and different than the scope of most current parking regulations. Alternatives from various communities are included in the application package; the Commission can review these and provide any commentary during the review of this matter at the July 17 meeting. From a Staff perspective, we are comfortable with the proposed language at this time. The Zoning Ordinance Update will allow for further review of these standards in the future. As well, individual special use applications would allow Staff and the Commission to probe this in further detail.

Conclusion & Recommendation

Staff has no objections to the proposed text amendments, although further Planning Commission consideration of the proposal (specifically parking) would be supported, prior to making a recommendation to the Township Board regarding the requested text amendment.



RECEIVED

JUN - 4 2025

PLANNING & ZONING
ADA TOWNSHIP

APPLICATION FOR REZONING OR OTHER AMENDMENT OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE (EXCLUDING PUD)

An application to request the rezoning of property or a zoning and text amendment must be heard before the Ada Township Planning Commission. **Regular meetings of the Planning Commission are held on the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at Ada Township Hall.** After receipt of the application and payment of the fee, your request will be placed on the next Planning Commission meeting agenda for the purpose of scheduling a public hearing. The hearing will be scheduled for the next month's Planning Commission meeting for consideration, with all legal notifications being met.

Recommendations from the Planning Commission are considered by the Ada Township Board of Trustees at the first available Ada Township Board of Trustees meeting following the regular Planning Commission meeting.

A non-refundable filing fee of \$750.00 made payable to Ada Township must accompany your application as well as a small-scale map of the property and an accurate legal description of the property. Please note that a \$1,000.00 escrow deposit may be required, at the discretion of Township officials and staff.

Applicant Information:

Name: Spark 43 Architects, LLC

Address: 6749 Fulton Street East, Suite A115, Ada, MI 49301

Phone Number: 616-288-4989

Email: john@spark43arch.com

Property Owner Name and Address (if different than above): _____

Property Information for a Rezoning Request:

Property Address: _____

Parcel Number: 41-_____-_____-_____-_____

Current Zone District Classification: _____

Proposed Zone District Classification: _____

For a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Request:

The following general amendment is requested to be made to the Zoning Ordinance:

See proposed zoning text amendment attached to this application.

For All Requests:

Attach a written statement that addresses the conformity of the request with the Township Master Plan.


I (we), the undersigned, do hereby make application and petition the Township to amend the Ada Township Zoning Ordinance and associated zoning map, if applicable, and also hereby grant permission to Ada Township and its officials and staff to enter upon the subject property for purposes of review and evaluation of this request.

Applicant's Signature(s):  Date: 06/04/25

Property Owner's Signature(s): _____ Date: _____
(If different than above)

APPLICATION FEE: \$750.00 **NOTE: Electronic file/pdf is required on all applications (submit via email).**

TO BE COMPLETED BY ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Application Received: <u>6-4-25</u>	Initial: <u>eb</u>	<u>Spark 43 Architects</u>	
mm / dd / yy			
Application Fee of \$ <u>750.00</u>	Received: <u>6/5/25</u>	Initial: <u></u>	Check # <u>10145</u> Receipt # <u>386527</u>
mm / dd / yy			
Escrow Deposit of \$ _____	Received: _____	Initial: _____	Check # _____ Receipt # _____
mm / dd / yy			



John Whitten, AIA, NCARB
6749 Fulton Street East, Suite A115
Ada, MI 49301

June 04, 2025

Ada Township Planning Commission
Ada Township
7330 Thornapple River Dr. PO Box 370
Ada, MI 49301

Re: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Request

Members of the planning commission-

While reviewing the Ada Township Zoning Ordinance for potential future project(s), we learned that the ordinance as currently adopted does not include an avenue to pursue construction of commercial recreation within the I-Industrial zoned district. Additionally, the off-street parking requirements for commercial recreation outlined in section 78-788 only addresses indoor facilities and does not distinguish between uses with high occupant density like fitness studios and indoor golf simulators and lower occupant density uses like basketball courts, tennis courts, hockey rinks, and soccer fields.

Spark 43 Architects is requesting text amendments to the current ordinance that will allow development of commercial recreation facilities in the I-Industrial Zoned District through special land use approval as well as a text amendment to the off-street parking requirements that more specifically address potential future land use in the township.

Background:

Many of the surrounding communities allow commercial recreation (both indoor and outdoor) through special land use approval in both the I-Industrial and LI-Light Industrial zoned districts (or districts with similar characteristics as those defined in Ada's ordinance). A list of neighboring communities as well as a summary of their ordinances can be found in Exhibit 1 (attached). Amending section 78-382 to include a special land use approval process for commercial recreation in the I-Industrial district has the potential to drive future development and economic impact within the township. Data shows that commercial recreation facilities positively impact businesses like restaurants, hotels, and retail establishments in the communities they are located.

Section 78-788 "Schedule of off-street parking requirements" does not currently differentiate between the different types of commercial recreation uses that could potentially be developed in the township, nor does it address outdoor commercial recreation use at all.

The lack of specificity in the ordinance is significant because occupant density in these facilities can vary significantly between smaller footprint facilities with many users such as indoor golf simulators or a boutique fitness studio and those with large footprint amenities such as tennis court(s), basketball court(s), hockey arena(s) or other similar athletic infrastructure with low occupant density.

For example:

- A single golf simulator is approximately 325nsf and can be used by 1 person at a time representing an occupant density of 325 net square feet per occupant. The building code would likely look at this use as a B occupancy and require an occupant load of 1 person per 150 gross square feet. If a 7,200nsf building full of golf simulators were constructed, it would be significantly denser than a similar sized tennis court by functional use alone. The golf simulator building would yield 48 occupants. The same sized building containing a tennis court would only be able to accommodate 4 to 6 people using a single court. In our experience, simulators tend to attract groups of people which make the occupant load even more dense than what the calculations typically yield.
 - Arguably, this type of use could be classified under the Michigan Building Code as A-2, A-3, A-4 or B occupancy which have different occupant load calculations that would change the overall parking calculations for a single 325sf golf simulator:

<u>Occupancy</u> <u>(single Sim)</u>	<u>MBC</u> <u>1004.5</u>	<u>Occ. Load</u> <u>Factor</u>	<u>78-788 Req'd</u> <u>Parking</u>	<u>Comments:</u>
A-2	7n	47	16	Likely excessive.
A-3	50n	7	3	Appropriate given use.
B	150	3	3	Appropriate given use.

- A single indoor tennis court including the minimum required safety overruns is 7,200 net square feet (nsf). During competition, the court can be used by a maximum of 4 athletes at any given time representing an occupant density of 1,800nsf per occupant even though the building code calculates the occupant load at 1:50 for tennis courts. Accordingly, parking requirements for a single indoor tennis court would be as follows:

<u>Occupancy</u>	<u>MBC</u> <u>1004.5</u>	<u>Occ. Load</u> <u>Factor</u>	<u>78-788 Req'd</u> <u>Parking</u>	<u>Comments:</u>
A-2	50n	47	48	Excessive given function.
A-3	50n	47	48	Excessive given function.
B	150g	48	16	Likely excessive given function.

- A full-size outdoor soccer field including safety overruns (but without fixed seating) is approximately 98,800nsf. The typical roster size for a soccer team is between 15 and 20 athletes, including coaches and support staff. We assume a design load of 25 people per team for a total of 50 people per field. This results in an occupant density of 1,976nsf per occupant (excluding spectators).

Assuming the same field is constructed indoors, it would require the following parking counts under the current ordinance:

<u>Occupancy</u>	<u>MBC 1004.5</u>	<u>Occ. Load Factor</u>	<u>78-788 Req'd Parking</u>	<u>Comments:</u>
A-2	50n	1,976	659	Excessive given function.
A-3	50n	1,976	659	Excessive given function.

659 parking spaces for a single indoor soccer field without fixed spectator seating (which would be an A-4 occupancy) is excessive. Under the current ordinance (and without a variance) that many spaces would be required.

For simplicity, we have avoided trying to quantify spectators in any of the examples above because it becomes extremely nuanced when there are not fixed spectator seats that yield a fixed occupant load factor.

We acknowledge that parking requirements based on square footage numbers or occupant load factors as prescribed in Section 78-788 of the ordinance and Table 1004.5 of the 2021 Michigan Building Code typically work well for many zoned districts and uses. Frankly, Ada's parking ordinance is excellent for the vast majority of uses in the township and compared to other communities we have lived and worked in.

However, the parking demands of commercial recreation tend to be extremely nuanced which is why we feel that it is important to differentiate them in the ordinance. Attached and for your benefit, we have included the parking requirements for these kinds of uses in surrounding communities (Exhibit 1) as a basis of comparison.

Each of the commercial recreation facilities we have been involved with have had unique operating parameters, site constraints, operating hours, differences in age demographics being served and natural rhythms that influence parking demand. In each case it has been beneficial for both the community and the landowners to develop appropriate parking plans that support a facility's operational needs while also balancing the needs of the broader community.

To that end, we request the following text amendments to the Ada Township Zoning Ordinance:

- Add the following language to Section 78-382:

“(15) Commercial Recreation, when approved by the planning commission as a special use, according to the standards of article XXI of this chapter.”

- Add the following use and parking requirements to Section 78-788 (b):

Use:

***Commercial
Gymnasium, tennis
courts sports fields,
or stadium and/or
similar place of
outdoor assembly***

Per each:

***Parking Operations Plan but not less than 4 Per court or
other recreational facility use plus parking required for
any accessory uses. If athletic fields are included, there
shall be one parking space for every three fixed seats
or one parking space for every six linear feet of team
bench but not less than 30 spaces per athletic field,
basketball court or hockey arena.***

I look forward to discussing our proposed amendments with you and welcome any questions the Planning Commission might have about our application!

Sincerely,



John Whitten, AIA, NCARB

principal architect, owner

Attachments: Exhibit 1

EXHIBIT 1

Recreation Use by District in Neighboring Communities

June 04, 2025

Township	Recreation Use by District			Parking Requirements
	Light Industrial	Industrial	Commercial	
Cascade	<u>T1 Transitional Industrial District</u> Other uses determined by the Planning Commission to be similar to the uses listed in Sections 13.03 and 13.04 hereof - Permitted by Special Use Permit	<u>I Industrial District</u> Other uses determined by the Planning Commission to be similar to the uses listed in Sections 13.03 and 13.04 hereof - Permitted by Special Use Permit	<u>B-2 General Business District</u> Athletic Clubs and Health Spas - Permitted By Right	Institution - Recreational Uses: (1) parking space per (4) persons maximum capacity
Grand Rapids	<i>Not a Designated District</i>	<u>SD-IT Special District - Industrial Transportation</u> Unlisted Use - If an application is submitted for a use not listed, the director shall make a determination as to the proper Zone District and use classification for the new or unlisted use in accordance with Section 5.4.04.	<u>MON-C Modern Era Neighborhood - Commercial</u> Health or athletic club, sports complex - Permitted	Health or athletic club, sports complex: (2.5) spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. plus accessory uses
Grand Rapids Township	<i>Not a Designated District</i>	<i>Not a Designated District</i>	<u>C General Commercial</u> Parks, athletic grounds, and athletic facilities - Permitted by Special Use	Health fitness centers: (5) spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area Public recreation centers: (5) spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area
Grandville	<u>I-1 Restricted Industrial</u> Indoor recreation centers and health or fitness centers - Permitted by Special Land Use	<u>I-2 Industrial</u> Indoor recreation centers and health or fitness centers - Permitted by Special Land Use	<u>C-3 Commercial Highway District</u> Indoor recreation centers, health or fitness centers and sports training centers - Permitted	<u>C Commercial</u> Indoor recreation centers, health or fitness centers and sports training centers: 5 per 1000 sq ft GLA, plus 1 per employee
			<u>C-4 Commercial Shopping Center District</u> Indoor recreation centers, health or fitness centers and sports training centers - Permitted	<u>I Industrial</u> Indoor recreation centers and health or fitness centers, and similar commercial recreational facilities completely within a closed building: 5 per 1000 sq ft GFA plus 1 per employee, or 6 per 1000 sq ft GFA
Holland	<i>Not a Designated District</i>	<u>I Industrial</u> Recreation Indoor - Permitted Accessory to an Industrial Use or in Non-Industrial outlots	<u>CMU Corridor Mixed Use</u> Recreation Indoor - Permitted Recreation Outdoor - Permitted	<u>CMU Corridor Mixed Use</u> Recreation Indoor: Approving Authority Determination Recreation Outdoor: Approving Authority Determination
		Recreation Outdoor - Not Permitted		

EXHIBIT 1

Recreation Use by District in Neighboring Communities June 04, 2025

Township	Light Industrial	Industrial	Commercial	Parking Requirements
Holland Charter Township	<u>I-1 Light Industrial District</u> Recreation facility, commercial, indoor - Permitted by Special Land Use	<u>I-2 General Industrial District</u> Recreation facility, commercial, indoor - Permitted by Special Land Use	<u>C-2 Community Commercial District</u> Recreation facility, commercial, indoor - Permitted by Special Land Use Recreation facility, commercial, outdoor - Permitted by Special Land Use <u>C-3 Highway Commercial District</u> Recreation facility, commercial, indoor - Permitted by Special Land Use Recreation facility, commercial, outdoor - Permitted by Special Land Use	Gymnasium, sports fields, or stadium or similar place of outdoor assembly: (1) for every three seats or one for every six feet of bench. For fields without spectator seating, there shall be a minimum of 30 spaces
Kentwood	<u>I-1 Light Industrial</u> Small Group Fitness and Rehabilitation Training Facility - Special Land Use	<u>I-2 General Industrial</u> Small Group Fitness and Rehabilitation Training Facility - Special Land Use	<u>C-2 Community Commercial</u> Recreation Facilities, Indoor - Permitted Recreation Facilities, Outdoor - Permitted <u>C-3 Regional Commercial</u> Recreation Facilities, Indoor - Permitted Recreation Facilities, Outdoor - Permitted <u>C-4 Office/Business</u> Recreation Facilities, Indoor - Permitted by Special Land Use approval Recreation Facilities, Outdoor - Permitted by Special Land Use approval	Recreational facilities Indoor: Parking Operations Plan but not less than 4 per court or other recreational facility use plus parking required for any accessory uses. If athletic fields are included, there shall be provided 20 spaces per field.
Lowell	<u>I-1 Light Industrial</u> Unlisted Use - Other principal uses similar to the above listed uses provided that Planning Commission finds that the operational characteristics and effects of such uses are compatible with the uses listed above.	Not a Designated District	<u>C- General Commercial</u> Health and physical fitness establishments Permitted	Health fitness centers: (5) spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area Public recreation centers: (5) spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area
Plainfield Charter Township	<u>I-1 Light Industrial</u> Health clubs or gyms - Permitted	<u>I-Industrial</u> Indoor Recreation Facilities - Special Land Use approval Outdoor Recreation Facilities Special Land Use approval	<u>C-1 Commercial</u> Health clubs or gyms - Permitted <u>CC Commuter Commercial</u> Health clubs or gyms - Permitted	Indoor Recreation Facilities: (1) per each 300 square feet of usable floor area Outdoor recreational facilities: Applicant shall demonstrate parking demand
Walker	<u>I-1 Light Industrial</u> Fitness centers and health clubs - Permitted as Accessory Use	<u>I-2 Heavy Industrial</u> Fitness centers and health clubs - Permitted as Accessory Use	<u>C-1 Local Commercial</u> Fitness centers and health clubs - Permitted Use <u>C-2 General Commercial</u> Fitness centers and health clubs - Permitted Use	Fitness centers and health clubs: (1) per 800 square feet UFA (Usable Floor Area) Commercial recreation: (1) per 800 square feet UFA (usable floor area)

EXHIBIT 1

Recreation Use by District in Neighboring Communities June 04, 2025

Township				Parking Requirements
	Light Industrial	Industrial	Commercial	
Wyoming	<u>I-1 Light Industrial</u> Athletic training facility - Permitted with approval of planning commission	<u>I-2 Industrial</u> Athletic training facility - Permitted after special approval	<u>B-1 Local Business District</u> Physical culture facilities, gymnasiums - Permitted <u>B-2 General Business District</u> Physical culture facilities, gymnasiums - Permitted	Indoor recreation establishments including gymnasiums, tennis courts and handball, roller or ice skating rinks, exhibition halls, dance halls, and banquet halls: (1) space for every 3 persons allowed within the maximum occupancy load as established by the city fire and building
Zeeland	<u>I-1 Light Industrial</u> Indoor recreational and indoor public assembly uses Permitted with approval by the planning commission	<u>I-2 General Industrial District</u> Indoor recreational and indoor public assembly uses Permitted by right	<u>C-3 Highway Commercial District</u> Indoor recreational facilities - Permitted by Right	Theaters, assembly areas, auditoriums, gymnasiums: (2) spaces for each 5 seats or each 8 feet of pew length or (1) space for each 3 persons allowed within the maximum capacity load established by any applicable codes or ordinances, whichever is greater