



CITY OF FLINT

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

MATTHEW TELLIGA, CHAIRMAN

Draft Meeting Minutes March 17th, 2026

Board Members Present:

Matthew Telliga, Chairman
Jerry Kea, Vice-Chairman
Lauren Coney
Derek Dohrman
Ramie Yelle
Willie Buford
Ari McCaskill
John Hardy
Carol-Anne Blower, PC Liaison

Board Members Absent:

N/A

Staff Present:

Max Lester, Zoning Coordinator
Glenn Steffens, Assistant City Attorney

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Telliga called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers at Flint City Hall as well as via Zoom.

Matthew Telliga, Chairman – present
Jerry Kea, Vice-Chairman – present
John Hardy – present
Ari McCaskill – absent (arrived around 6:01 pm)
Ramie Yelle – present

Willie Buford – present
Lauren Coney – present
Derek Dohrman – present
Carol-Anne Blower – present

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Coney made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Buford seconded the motion. Chairman Telliga asked for a voice vote.

M/S – Coney/Buford

The motion carried via voice vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The draft minutes of February 17th, 2026 were presented.

Vice-Chairman Kea requested the following corrections:

- Page 2 – Add commas before and after “if permitted”
- Page 3 – Add a comma after “Max responded stating”
- Page 3 – Add a comma after “...is the same case”
- Page 4 – Replace semi-colon with a period where it says “...Miller Rd.; she added...”
- Page 5 – Add context “of six feet” after “...should be 20 feet for the current height.”
- Page 5 – Add a comma after “...in planning”
- Page 5 – Remove the second “would” in “..., would the six (6) foot height would be allowed.”



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Vice-Chairman Kea made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Coney seconded the motion.

M/S – Kea/Coney

The motion carried via voice vote.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Telliga opened the public forum.

No one spoke. Chairman Telliga closed the public forum.

REPORTS:

There was no information to report.

COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no communications received for this meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING:

ZBA 26-3: URC FJ, LLC. requests a non-use variance to provide relief from §50-33(G) to allow 13% transparency on the north façade of a proposed structure at 300 E. First St. (PID # 41-18-127-020), zoned DE Downtown Edge.

Max gave a summary of the staff report via presentation. Chairman Telliga asked Max to read the staff recommendation at the end of the report. Max confirmed, and resumed the presentation. Max stated that there are no marked or designated crosswalks from Wallenberg going across First St. Instead, pedestrians must either cross the street behind the Farmer's Market or at the intersection of Harrison St. & First St. Max indicated that a supplemental document was provided to each board member which shows an alternative façade material for the north façade; the Board may consider the alternative façade within a final motion. The staff recommendation states that there appears to be sufficient reasoning to approve the non-use variance and added that a condition of approval requiring a mural or other decorative design is included on the north façade wall. Max reiterated that the applicant has also proposed an alternative façade material and that the Board may not specify the content of a required mural.

Moses Timlin, Real Estate Development Manager at Uptown Reinvestment Corporation (URC), spoke as the applicant for this request. Shannon White, Owner and Principal of FUNchitecture, was also present. Mr. Timlin stated this project has been in development for a couple years and has gone through many revisions. He added that they understand the spirit and intent of the ordinance and that there are a few complications that apply to this site specifically. There are transformers within the project area that have been on the site prior to its ownership and rehabilitation by URC. The "back of house" operations are proposed along First St. as that is where the existing infrastructure is located. The other façades as proposed have a transparency calculation exceeding 70% with the intent of compensating for the lesser area of transparency requested on the north façade.

Ms. White opened a presentation to display the appearance of the proposed building. Ms. White stated that this site is challenging because all four sides of the building are public facing. She said toilets, the bar, the kitchen, storage, and other functions must be within the building and will encompass more than just two new vendors. The space will



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become another community gathering place that can be rented for events. The building is as transparent as it can be while also accommodating back of house functions such as a walk-in cooler for the MSU Dairy Store. Ms. White explained the interior arrangement of the planned expansion. There are two sides that are evenly split but will be open to each other. The kitchen, bathrooms, mechanical room, and coolers are proposed for the north area of the building. The south façade is designed to allow more room for events or food trucks. Ms. White explained the façade alternative material that may be an option to replace the stone and metal façade. The alternative material would deviate from the design language of the Farmer's Market but would allow more area for a mural. She also suggested that the transformers may also be able to be painted if they are given permission. A sketch-up model was displayed but was not able to display.

Vice-Chairman Kea asked for clarification that the image showing the mural is of the north facing side of the building along First St. Ms. White confirmed. He asked for further clarification that the variance request will allow windows consisting of 13% transparency while the ordinance requires 70% transparency. Ms. White confirmed. Commissioner Yelle asked if a window could be added into the rood peak. Ms. White explained that the area in the peak would only show trusses. Mr. Timlin explained that the ordinance only calculates windows within two (2) to eight (8) feet from grade within the transparency requirement. Commissioner Yelle asked staff for clarification on the difference between a mural and a sign. Chairman Telliga said that the Board would only specify whether to include a mural or not. Max said that in the example shown, the "MSU Dairy Store" item would be a sign, but the mural would not be a sign. Mr. Timlin said the MSU sign is intended as a painted wall sign. Max clarified that the ordinance does not permit signs painted on walls. Mr. Timlin clarified his intent to say that more area can include painting for a mural if desired to make the façade more aesthetically pleasing. Board members discussed the differences between murals and signage. Max stated they will make a determination as to what is a sign or mural strictly.

Commissioner Dohrman asked for more explanation as to why the north facing wall was decided for the back of house area. Ms. White explained that they believe the majority of visitors will be parking in the lot and accessing the site from the south side. The west side of the building includes an outdoor patio a garage door that can open between the indoor and outdoor portions of the bar. The east side of the building is an access point to and from the Farmer's Market building. They believe the north facing façade is the best option available, especially when considering the location of the transformers.

Chairman Telliga opened the floor to public comment.

Cade Surface, a resident of the 5th Ward, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Surface said that he is very supportive of the overall project but he does not believe the variance should be granted. Mr. Surface believes that the reasons posited for the need for the variance can be resolved, especially with the resources available to the applicant. He said that he believes there is a solution that is sensitive to the complexities of the space but also meets the spirit of the ordinance which is concerned with the built environment affects the day-to-day quality of life of residents. Mr. Surface said he does not think a practical difficulty has been sufficiently demonstrated, specifically that compliance is unreasonable. He added that the site is not particularly unique as there are strange parcels all over downtown that have had solutions to make them work. Mr. Surface said that there were buildings on this



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property before that met their respective standards. While the electric infrastructure has been in place prior to the applicant owning the property, the shed itself was put in by the applicant. Mr. Surface also challenged the idea that all sides are public. He said that he understands where that perception comes from, the only façade that truly faces a public street is the one subject to the variance request. Mr. Surface said he also understands that there aren't developments across the street that would generate more pedestrian traffic, but poor planning decisions for other properties should not encourage poor planning decisions for adjacent properties. Current planning decisions should carry forward the intent to create quality spaces.

Chairman Telliga closed the floor to public comment.

Mr. Timlin said the transformers are not owned by the applicant and would require coordination with Consumers to relocate. The transformers have been in place for two decades and service the entire block.

Commissioner McCaskill made a motion to conditionally approve ZBA 26-3, being the non-use variance requested by Moses Timlin of Uptown Reinvestment Corporation, to provide relief from §50-33(G) to allow 13% transparency on the north façade of a proposed structure at 300 E. First St. (PID # 41-18-127-020), zoned DE Downtown Edge, based on staff materials, the discussion held, and the following findings of fact:

- It complies with **Standard 1** because compliance with the strict letter of the Zoning Ordinance will unreasonably prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose and/or will render conformity with such restrictions unnecessarily burdensome.
- It complies with **Standard 2** because the plight is due to unique circumstances of the property and/or it does not apply generally to the same zone district or to general neighborhood conditions.
- It complies with **Standard 3** because the need for the variance was not created by the applicant or the applicant's predecessors in title.
- It complies with **Standard 4** because the variance would not cause substantial detriment to adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood.
- It complies with **Standard 5** because the variance will be consistent with and will not materially impair the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The following condition was added to the motion for approval:

- Include a mural.

Commissioner Coney seconded the motion.

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Chairman Telliga asked for a roll call vote.

Commissioner Hardy, yes
Commissioner Buford, yes
Commissioner Yelle, yes
Commissioner Dohrman, yes
Vice-Chairman Kea, yes

Commissioner McCaskill, yes
Commissioner Coney, yes
Commissioner Blower, yes
Chairman Telliga, yes

M/S – McCaskill/Coney

9 – yes, 0 – no, 0 – abstain

The motion carried via roll call vote.

Commissioner McCaskill asked about the timeline for this project. Mr. Timlin said the plan is to break ground this year once all planning reviews and conditions are complete. The planned opening date is around Spring 2027 with a completion deadline by the end of 2027. Ms. White shared that she was contacted by a couple of the original consultants from Project for Public Spaces who worked on the Farmer's Market pavilion and adaptive reuse. Ms. White said that post COVID a lot of public markets have failed, not just those catering to farmers but also those with indoor year-round markets. The consultants from Project for Public Spaces were complimentary about this project, stating the resiliency of Flint is that it keeps reinventing itself. The consultants believe it is a good idea to adaptively reuse a space such as the outdoor stalls if they are not being utilized.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:

Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS:

By-Laws Review – On hold, pending legal review.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner McCaskill made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Coney seconded the motion.

M/S – McCaskill/Coney

The motion carried via voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.