

NEW BUSINESS

2026-0277

Public Hearing and Request for Conditional Use Recommendation - File No. PCU206-0003 - for alcoholic beverage sales for onsite consumption that is ancillary to an otherwise permissible use (pub/restaurant) for Perk's Pub, located at 3204 Walton Blvd. within the University Square shopping center, on the north side of Walton and west of Adams, Parcel 15-07-476-009, zoned CB Community Business with the FB Flex Business Overlay; Leonard Perkaj, Perk's Pub, LLC, Applicant

(Staff Report dated 6/8/26, Business Introductory Letter, Floor Plan, Site Plan, Development Application, Environmental Impact Statement, Menu, and Public Hearing Notice had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record hereof.)

Present for the applicant were Leo Perkaj, owner of Perk's Pub, LLC, and Loretta Adams, landlord of the shopping center.

Chairperson Hooper introduced a public hearing and request for conditional use approval for alcoholic beverage sales for onsite consumption ancillary to an otherwise permissible use for Perks Pub, located at 3204 Walton Boulevard within the University Square Shopping Center. Chairperson Hooper invited the applicant to the microphone. Mr. Perkaj introduced himself as the applicant, and Ms. Adams introduced herself as the landlord for the shopping center. Chairperson Hooper then turned the presentation over to Mr. McLeod.

Mr. McLeod stated that the conditional use request would serve as a recommendation to the City Council. He provided an overview of the application for 3204 Walton Boulevard, located on the north side of Walton Boulevard, just west of Adams Road. The proposed site is an approximately 1,900-square-foot tenant space, formerly occupied by a restaurant named "Burgerz," with planned seating for 56 people in various configurations. The space will include standard restaurant amenities, including kitchen, prep, and dishwashing areas.

Mr. McLeod noted that the former tenant utilized a small outdoor seating area and requested that the applicant clarify if they intend to include outdoor seating, as it was not part of their formal submittal. He briefly mentioned that the menu would feature typical bar fare and highlighted the applicants' extensive restaurant experience, noting their operation of Half Day Cafe and Bread and Yolk. Mr. McLeod concluded his presentation by providing zoning context, stating that the overall site and the area to its east are zoned Community Business (CB), while the area to the west is zoned Special Purpose (SP) to accommodate senior living facilities.

Mr. McLeod continued his presentation, noting that the tenant space is located on the easterly side of the shopping center. He explained that this location provides adequate separation from residential living areas, particularly since any potential outdoor seating would be highly limited.

Regarding parking, Mr. McLeod acknowledged that while securing a space

directly in front of the shopping center can occasionally be challenging, there is ample, underutilized parking available to the east, west, and rear of the building. He emphasized that because the location previously operated as a restaurant, the primary change in the site's use is simply the addition of alcohol sales.

Mr. McLeod stated the proposed hours of operation are 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. He described the floor plan, noting that the front half of the space will be designated for public use, while the back half will be dedicated to food production. He reiterated staff's confidence that the site provides more than enough parking to properly accommodate the business.

Finally, Mr. McLeod reviewed the City's general standards for conditional uses: that the proposed use promotes the intent of the ordinance, is designed to be compatible and harmonious with the surrounding area, and is adequately served by public facilities. He stated that the staff report concluded the application meets or exceeds all requirements and would neither be detrimental to neighboring uses nor create additional public infrastructure costs. Mr. McLeod then offered to answer any questions from the Commission.

Chairperson Hooper opened the public hearing for the request. Noting that no public comment cards had been submitted, he closed the public hearing and asked if the applicants had anything to state for the record.

Ms. Adams spoke from the landlord's perspective, noting that her company already hosts three other restaurants operated by the Perkaj family, including Tangled Apron in Macomb Township. She clarified that this location would be their fourth restaurant partnered with the Perkaj family, alongside Bread and Yolk in Orion and Half Day Cafe. She stated that she manages six shopping centers with approximately 80 tenants and is on-site daily. She explained that they generally avoid allowing liquor licenses due to the additional management required, noting that the only other active liquor license across their properties is also held by the Perkaj family. Ms. Adams praised the Perkaj family as exceptional, hardworking tenants who are present behind the grill of their businesses every day. She expressed her understanding of the magnitude of the request and gave the application her full blessing.

Chairperson Hooper asked if the applicants were bringing a liquor license in with them. Mr. Perkaj confirmed that they are, stating they are currently working with a broker and are waiting on this approval to finalize the deposits.

Chairperson Hooper outlined the remaining steps in the process, advising that if the conditional use is recommended tonight, the applicants will still need to go before the liquor license technical review committee, and finally the City Council. He asked if the applicants understood these remaining steps. Mr. Perkaj confirmed that they understood the remaining process.

Chairperson Hooper then opened the floor for Planning Commission discussion.

Ms. Neubauer stated that she had no objections and would support the request, provided the applicants successfully clear the remaining procedural steps.

Mr. Struzik expressed his support, noting the benefit of having an established community business person open another location. He cautioned the applicants to ensure their staff are well-trained regarding underage drinking laws due to the anticipated college-aged clientele, highlighting the severe penalties for mistakes in that area.

Mr. Dettloff inquired about the status of the escrow license deposit. Mr. Perkaj clarified that they have retained an escrow license through a broker and are simply waiting to place the deposit.

Mr. Dettloff noted that there are currently no other facilities in the shopping plaza with a liquor license. Ms. Adams reiterated that they typically shy away from such tenancies. Mr. Perkaj and Ms. Adams then recalled that the restaurant "Oceana" previously held a liquor license in the center before relocating.

Mr. Dettloff expressed his full support for the application. He asked if the Liquor Control Commission (LCC) had placed any stipulations on the applicants, and it was confirmed that there were no LCC stipulations. Mr. Dettloff wished the applicants good luck with the project.

Mr. Weaver expressed his support for the application, stating that parking will not be an issue based on his familiarity with the area and frequent visits to Half Day Cafe. He inquired about the types of drinks that would be served. Mr. Perkaj replied that they will offer standard bar drinks, including draft beers and cocktails.

When asked by Mr. Weaver what would separate their establishment from the Red Ox, a nearby bar, Mr. Perkaj and Ms. Adams cited their high-quality service, food, and hospitality as the distinguishing factors. Mr. Perkaj mentioned they had initially worried about parking themselves, noting that customers sometimes park at Busch's and walk over when it is busy. Mr. Weaver replied that having a full lot is a good problem to have and reiterated his confidence in their success. Ms. Adams added that there would be less evening parking and traffic ingress and egress from other tenants.

Mr. Perkaj stated that the business intends to cater primarily to families. Mr. Weaver agreed that families would likely be their main demographic, though Ms. Adams and Mr. Perkaj noted that college students might still frequent the establishment, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights.

Mr. Weaver then asked if the restaurant would feature table service or operate similarly to Half Day Cafe. Mr. Perkaj confirmed they will provide table service and highlighted that they will bake their own sourdough bread for all of their sandwiches. In response to a final question from Mr. Weaver, Mr. Perkaj confirmed that they will also offer gluten-free options.

Ms. Denstaedt inquired about the anticipated opening date. Mr. Perkaj explained that they had experienced some complications with building permits, but expect to receive them by Wednesday and are targeting an opening date at the end of August.

Ms. Denstaedt then asked about their staffing plans and whether they would share employees with Half Day Cafe. Mr. Perkaj confirmed that they will share staff with both Half Day Cafe and Bread and Yolk, adding that he will also be working on-site daily.

Ms. Brnabic expressed her support for the request and asked to verify if there were any plans for outdoor dining. Mr. Perkaj confirmed that there will be no outdoor dining.

A motion was made by Mr. Struzik and second by Neubauer. After a roll call vote, Chairperson Hooper noted that the motion was passed unanimously.

Ms. Neubauer thanked the applicants for keeping their business in Rochester Hills.

Mr. McLeod informed the applicants that staff will target the July 13th City Council meeting for the next step of the approval process, noting that the timeline may be tight due to the upcoming holiday. He advised the applicants to work quickly through the Clerk's Office to schedule their required liquor license technical review committee meeting. Ms. Adams confirmed they would act immediately to meet the requirements.

A motion was made by Struzik, seconded by Neubauer, that this matter be Recommended for Approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Brnabic, Denstaedt, Hooper, Neubauer, Struzik, Weaver and Dettloff

Excused 2 - Hetrick and Gallina

Resolved, in the matter of File No. PCU2026-0003 (Perks Pub), located at 3204 Walton, the Planning Commission recommends to City Council Approval of the Conditional Use to allow sales for on premises alcoholic beverage consumption associated with a restaurant use, based on documents received by the Planning Department on September 18, 2025 with the following findings:

Findings

1. The proposed use will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The existing building and proposed conditional use have been designed and is proposed to be operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use.
3. The proposed restaurant use should have a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by providing additional eating and gathering opportunities within this area of the City and the proposed operators of the business have extensive experience operating restaurant businesses within the City and surrounding communities.
4. The existing development and proposed use are served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, water and sewer, drainage ways, and refuse disposal.

5. The existing development and proposed use should not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare. In addition, a use of this nature falls in line with the Community Business District.

6. The proposal will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

Conditions

1. City Council approval of the Conditional Use.

2. If, in the determination of City staff, the intensity of the use changes or increases, in terms of traffic, noise, hours, lighting, odor, or other aspects that may cause adverse off-site impact, City staff may require and order the conditional use approval to be remanded to the Planning Commission and City Council as necessary for reexamination of the conditional use approval and conditions for possible revocation, modification or supplementation.