

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

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ZONING REWRITE AD-HOC COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2026

1:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order** by Beard
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call**

Present: Jed Hemming, Kevin Beard, Julie Alexander, Also present: Planner Sara Kopriva, Ethan Senti and Chris Khorey with McKenna via Zoom.

Excused: Donna Hornberger

4. **Approve Agenda**

Motion by Alexander to approve as written with a second by Hemming.

Motion Passes

5. **Brief Citizen Comments:**

Maura Sanders, Township Supervisor, 13235 Center Rd: Reported that the Zoning Administrator has been asked to prepare a planning update summarizing the transition from previous planning leadership to current staff and outlining the overall status of the zoning ordinance rewrite and related planning efforts. The update will be presented to the Township Board in the coming weeks, either at the next meeting or later in March. After reviewing the update, the Board will discuss priorities and provide direction to the Planning Commission and the Agricultural Advisory Committee, helping establish a roadmap for the FY 2026–2027 planning and zoning work. Clarified that the referenced strategic planning discussion pertains specifically to the Planning and Zoning Department, not a township-wide strategic planning process.

6. **Communications:** none
7. **Conflict of Interest:** none
8. **Approve meeting minutes:**
 - a. **December 8, 2025 Zoning Rewrite Ad-Hoc Committee Regular Meeting**

Motion by Alexander to approve with a second by Hemming.

Motion Passes

9. **Business:**
 - a. **Zoning Rewrite Project Plan Update**

Sara Kopriva, Planner: Explained that the document serves as a handoff framework from prior planning leadership to guide the ongoing zoning ordinance rewrite. As the committee's first meeting of the year, the discussion reestablished the project and reviewed progress. Current work focuses on Phase One priorities: shoreline regulations, signage, short-term rentals, and special use permits. The shoreline amendment is scheduled for Planning Commission review and may soon move to the Township Board, while the remaining items will require Planning Commission public hearings. Staff and the

consultant, McKenna, are continuing to refine draft articles with committee feedback before forwarding them to the Planning Commission and Board.

The broader rewrite will also address larger policy topics, including community facilities districts, floodplain and wetland regulations, shoreline standards, lighting, water and sewer density, and agricultural processing language. Some agricultural provisions may depend on the outcome of ongoing litigation and may need to be revisited later.

Alexander expressed concern that the signage amendment may not be adopted in time for the upcoming farm stand season and urged that the process move more quickly. Staff noted the Planning Commission will review the signage language at its upcoming meeting, with only minor revisions made. A public hearing could be scheduled for April, and if no significant concerns arise, the Planning Commission could act the same evening and forward the amendment to the Township Board. Special meetings could also be considered to help meet the timeline. It was also clarified that the short-term rental amendment does not change policy but reorganizes existing ordinance language and a ZBA decision into a clearer section of the code to make the prohibition easier for the public to locate and understand.

The committee discussed proposed changes to the special use permit process, including sending the approach to the township attorney for legal review. The discussion was prompted by a minor site plan modification request from St. Joseph Church that currently requires a full special use permit review. Proposed amendments would allow minor changes to receive a quicker review while reserving full review for major modifications.

Hemming also raised agricultural concerns, noting that the agricultural community generally favors expanding uses by right where clear standards exist. They suggested this approach could reduce administrative burden for both farmers and the township while making permitted activities easier for property owners to understand. Staff agreed the concept aligns with modern zoning practices and will be explored further during the ordinance rewrite, while recognizing that higher-intensity uses may still require special use permits.

Alexander raised concerns about airport regulations after attending a recent airport meeting, noting that existing airport overlay requirements and potential airport expansion could affect township planning and zoning decisions. The group agreed the topic should be added to the list of key issues for further review.

Members also discussed prioritizing major ordinance topics moving forward. Suggested farm processing regulations and dark sky lighting standards as higher priorities, while noting shoreline and floodplain regulations already have a solid foundation. Staff clarified that these key topics are intended for more in-depth discussion during the next phase of the rewrite, with changes likely adopted as part of the full ordinance update. Concerns were also noted about awareness of the airport overlay district boundaries and how they may affect future development proposals.

Sara confirmed that an interactive zoning map is available on the township website, allowing users to search parcels and view zoning districts, use tables, and district regulations. The map was digitized from the official paper zoning map, which remains the legal record and is used for verification. Once the new ordinance is adopted, the map will be updated and maintained in a fully digital format.

b. District Use Tables

Chris and Ethan from McKenna and Associates presented proposed updates to zoning district use allowances. The memo outlines changes to where certain uses are permitted and proposes new categories such as accessory outdoor recreational activities, indoor and outdoor event venues, and a separate restaurant use.

Two tables show how the proposed changes apply to both the current ordinance and the 2019 draft ordinance. In the commercial district, several uses are proposed to shift to permitted by right, including bed and breakfasts, hoists and docks, indoor event venues, greenhouses and nurseries with retail sales, restaurants, and retail establishments, while outdoor event venues would remain a special use.

McKenna team explained that the use standards are proposed recommendations for discussion, intended to ensure certain commercial-type activities remain accessory to agriculture in the A-1 district. The discussion focused on the

difficulty of defining agritourism, noting that GAAMPs and the Right to Farm Act do not clearly address it. Members agreed that draft agritourism language from the Agricultural Advisory Committee should be reviewed by the Planning Commission and shared with McKenna to guide ordinance revisions.

Alexander asked clarifying questions about several uses in the draft tables. It was confirmed that “secondary dwelling” in the 2019 draft refers to an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), though the group noted ADUs have been discussed as potentially requiring a special use permit with specific criteria.

Questions were also raised about fencing permits, indoor recreation uses, and whether uses such as veterinary clinics and kennels should also be allowed in commercial districts. Staff clarified that recreational unit sales refers to RV sales and that tenant houses are intended for full-time farm employees, while migrant housing refers to seasonal workers. Members also suggested adding remote tasting rooms to the table and removing the outdated “winery chateau” term, noting that current ordinance language refers instead to winery farm processing facilities.

Alexander suggested that farm processing facilities selling spirits under an MLCC license may warrant a separate use category and possibly require a special use permit due to potential higher intensity of use. Others noted these operations are still part of agricultural processing and questioned whether they differ significantly from wineries or similar uses. The group agreed the issue should be discussed further.

Hemming advocated for expanding uses by right rather than requiring special use permits for several agricultural-related activities, including riding stables, livestock auction yards, sawmills, kennels, and greenhouses with retail sales, noting that many of these are closely tied to agriculture. Hemming notes that some of these topics are currently being discussed by the Agricultural Advisory Committee and that their input should inform ordinance updates.

Staff agreed that clearer policy direction from the Agricultural Advisory Committee would be helpful before finalizing related ordinance language. The committee noted that upcoming work on a small farm processing ordinance could provide guidance, after which staff and consultants will compare that direction with the 2019 draft ordinance and identify areas where revisions may be needed.

Alexander suggested revising event venue standards to reference the township’s noise ordinance rather than specific decibel limits. The discussion clarified that outdoor entertainment would end at 10:00 p.m., while indoor activities could continue later in accordance with other applicable regulations.

The committee discussed secondary dwellings (ADUs) and concerns about increasing residential density. Staff noted the current ordinance allows a second dwelling only on larger lots that meet double lot size requirements. Members debated whether ADUs on smaller lots could undermine density limits, while others emphasized their value for family housing needs. The McKenna group noted that restrictions on family-only occupancy or rentals may be difficult to enforce. The issue remains unresolved and will require further policy direction.

McKenna clarified that barn storage in the 2019 draft applies to pre-existing barns and allows rental storage to help support historic farms, but does not permit construction of new buildings for that purpose. Members also discussed potential demand for boat and recreational vehicle storage facilities in the township.

The group reviewed temporary dwellings, typically RVs or mobile homes used during home construction, noting conflicting language in the draft. Members suggested allowing them for a limited time through a land use permit rather than a variance.

The committee discussed whether golf courses and country clubs should be allowed in agricultural districts. McKenna noted the 2019 draft does permit them there and their removal may have been an error. Members also raised concerns about potential traffic and environmental impacts, particularly near waterfront areas. The issue was identified as a policy decision requiring further discussion.

Unresolved policy questions from the rewrite committee will be compiled and brought to the Planning Commission for guidance before being incorporated into the draft ordinance. Members also noted that past proposals may provide useful context for some decisions.

McKenna explained that the use standards are proposed recommendations for discussion, intended to ensure certain commercial-type activities remain accessory to agriculture in the A-1 district. The discussion focused on the difficulty of defining agritourism, noting that GAAMPs and the Right to Farm Act do not clearly address it. Members agreed that draft

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Jenna Beattie, Recording Secretary

agritourism language from the Agricultural Advisory Committee should be reviewed by the Planning Commission and shared with McKenna to guide ordinance revisions.

10. Citizen Comments: none

11. Committee Comments: none

Adjournment

Motion by Alexander to adjourn, with a second by Hemming.

Motion Passes

Meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

DRAFT