PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI
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Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
July 9, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
Township Hall
Minutes

1. **Call to Order by Beard at 7:02 p.m.**
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call – Present:** Alexander, Beard, Eckstein, Hall, Hornberger; **Absent/Excused:** Shanafelt, Shipman; **Planner of Record:** Sara Schroeder
4. **Approve Agenda**

Motion by Alexander to approve the agenda, seconded by Hornberger. **Motion Passes**

5. **Brief Citizen Comments (For Agenda Items Not Scheduled for Public Hearing): none**
6. **Communications:** Email from Commissioner Shanafelt, points to be discussed during applicable business item sections.
7. **Conflict of Interest: none**
8. **Approval of Minutes**
   a. **June 4, 2026 meeting minutes**

Motion by Hornberger to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Hall. **Motion Passes**

9. **Business**
   a. **Public Hearing** Signage - Zoning Amendment #208

Schroeder explains that the packet includes the most recent revisions, including changes made since the prior Planning Commission discussion, and notes a correction to prohibited sign language regarding signs in disrepair.
PC discusses total sign area, number of signs, sign height, off-premises signs, temporary and seasonal signs, commercial and residential signage limits, legal nonconforming signs, and consistency with scenic byway goals. Revisions are requested to clarify that prohibited signs include signs in disrepair; cap total on-premises signage in agricultural and commercial districts at 60 square feet in any combination; cap total on-premises residential signage at 30 square feet; and revise off-premises agricultural signage to allow one temporary sign and one seasonal sign per lot, each six square feet and four feet tall.
The public hearing opens. No public comment is offered, and the public hearing closes.
Motion by Alexander to recommend approval of Zoning Amendment #208 by the Town Board, seconded by Eckstein. **Motion Passes**

   b. **Public Hearing** Chickens - Zoning Amendment #211

Schroeder explains that the PC previously reviewed the amendment, which was brought back after earlier discussion and scheduled for public hearing. She notes that the most recent changes remove language requiring chickens to remain only within a covered enclosed area, while still requiring an enclosure and allowing a fenced yard area.
PC discusses related zoning sections to be amended and briefly clarify that livestock provisions differ between agricultural and residential districts. Commissioners state that the amendment is straightforward, consistent

with other communities, and would bring existing backyard chicken keeping into conformity where the standards are met.
The public hearing opens. No public comment is offered, and the public hearing closes.
Motion by Hornberger to recommend approval of Zoning Amendment #211 by the Town Board, seconded by Alexander. **Motion Passes**

c. Special Use Process - Zoning Amendment #210

Schroeder explains that the draft includes edits from the prior meeting. PC reviews comments submitted by Shanafelt, including typographical corrections and concern about the proposed threshold for minor amendments involving building footprint increases. PC agrees to revise the threshold from 20% to 10%, not to exceed 1,000 square feet.
Commissioners discuss the purpose and effect of classifying an amendment as minor, noting that minor amendments would still require PC review and Township Board approval but would not require public hearings. Revisions are requested to clarify review procedure language, remove obsolete table references, correct wording throughout the draft, require a written report or recommendation from the planner when determining whether an amendment is minor, remove quotation marks around "minor," and retain "materially" and "excessive" in certain review standards. Members also discuss whether the amendment should reference consistency with the Township Master Plan. The PC requests legal review of that issue, as well as a review of the language stating that a breach of any condition, safeguard, or requirement automatically invalidates a permit. PC agrees that the draft should return at the July 27 meeting with the discussed revisions and any available attorney feedback.
Motion by Hall to schedule Zoning Amendment #210 for public hearing at the August 24 meeting of the Planning Commission, seconded by Hornberger. **Motion Passes**

d. Accessory Dwelling Units - Zoning Amendment

Schroeder explains that revisions were made following the prior meeting and review of other ordinances, including setting a flat maximum ADU size of 800 square feet, removing repeated height and lot coverage language already addressed elsewhere in the zoning ordinance, and revising lot size requirements so the larger lot size standard applies only to detached ADUs.
PC discusses attached and detached ADUs, lot size requirements, family and housing needs, and the goal of allowing additional housing options while reducing potential misuse. Members also clarify owner-occupancy language so that the owner must occupy either the principal dwelling or the ADU, and note that separate rental restriction language is not needed because short-term rentals are already prohibited by the zoning ordinance. Amendment is assigned next available number which is #212.
Motion by Hall to schedule Zoning Amendment #212 for public hearing at the August 24 meeting of the Planning Commission, seconded by Hornberger. **Motion Passes**

e. Meeting Schedule - Regular Meeting 4th Monday of Month, Optional Meetings 2nd Monday of Month

Schroeder explains that the revised schedule includes regular meeting dates and optional second meeting dates, with no fourth Monday meeting in December and no second Monday meeting in October due to the holiday. She notes that staff availability has been confirmed and that the Township website will be updated if the schedule is approved.
Motion by Alexander to approve the new meeting schedule and send onto the Town Board for adoption, seconded by Eckstein. **Motion Passes**

10. Reports & Updates - Verbal

a. Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) - (Beard)

The AAC did not meet in July due to cherry harvest season, but at its June meeting continued discussion of small processing and farm stays. PC requests the January 20, 2026 AAC packet materials regarding small processing for future review.

b. Township Board (Alexander)

Reminds PC of the upcoming joint meeting with the Town Board on Right to Farm and GAAMPs. PC members should advise staff if they cannot attend.

c. Non-Motorized Plan (Schroeder):

Reports that the non-motorized plan will be placed on the August 24 PC agenda, with McKenna expected to present. Brief discussion on whether the non-motorized plan may become part of the Township Master Plan. Schroeder states that additional information about process and status will be provided.

11. Brief Public Comments: none

12. Other Matters or Comments by Planning Commission Members

Discussion: Schroeder provides an update on the zoning ordinance rewrite. She explains that the rewrite committee has discussed moving the full draft zoning ordinance to the PC for review, with McKenna preparing a timeline organized by articles or sections. The draft will be made available, specific topics will be scheduled for discussion, and optional second meetings will help the PC work through the rewrite, with a goal of moving the ordinance toward public hearing and Township Board review by the end of the year. McKenna is expected to help kick off the PC review at the August 24 meeting and participate in future meetings by Zoom.

Hall thanks the entire Commission, Schroeder, and LaFond for their service to Township government. He encourages residents to participate by serving on commissions or running for Township office, noting that involvement in the process provides a better understanding of local government.

Commissioners thank Randy Hall for his service at this, his final meeting as a PC member, noting his leadership, legal perspective, and contributions to the PC and Township.

Hornberger reports that she attended her first Zoning Board of Appeals meeting after being appointed and sworn in.

Schroeder notes that the Township is seeking ZBA alternates and encourages interested residents to contact the Supervisor. She also reports that an ordinance amendment tracker has been added to the Township website to help the public follow the status of zoning amendments.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Hall to adjourn, seconded by Alexander. **Motion Passes**

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.