PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

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Planning Commission
Special Meeting
September 14, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
Township Hall
Minutes

1. **Call to Order by Beard at 7:00 p.m.**
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call – Present:** Alexander, Beard, Eckstein, Lyon, Shipman; **Planner of Record:** Sara Schroeder; **Consultant:** Chris Khorey, McKenna via Teams; **Excused:** Hornberger, Shanafelt
4. **Approve Agenda**
5. **Election of Officers**
   Motion by Shipman to approve agenda with Election of Officers moved to September 28 Regular Meeting, seconded by Alexander. **Motion Passes**
6. **Brief Citizen Comments:** none
7. **Communications:** Amie Shaw, Jed Hemming, Grant Parsons, Joe Gorka
8. **Conflict of Interest:** none
9. **Business**
   a. **Ord# 212 Accessory Dwelling Unit Amendment**

Schroeder reviews revisions to Amendment #212 based on the prior meeting, including removal of the minimum lot-size requirement and reduction of the required separation between an ADU and the principal dwelling from 25 feet to 10 feet. Members revisit the minimum ADU size and question the distinction between new detached ADUs and ADUs created within existing structures. Members agree there is no clear reason to apply different minimum-size requirements and discuss requiring all ADUs to be a minimum of 300 square feet and a maximum of 800 square feet. Members discuss the 800-square-foot maximum and whether detached ADUs should be permitted. Concerns are raised that detached units may be more likely to be used as short-term rentals. Members consider limiting detached ADUs or requiring access through the principal dwelling and agree to further explore these options with the Township Attorney while maintaining flexibility for legitimate family housing. Discussion focuses on emphasizing family housing as the purpose of ADUs and considering whether to initially limit them to attached units to reduce potential short-term rental use. Staff will revise the amendment and bring it back for further discussion on September 28.

   b. **Draft Zoning Ordinance – Articles 8, 9**

Members review Article 8 and Shanafelt's comments, including a recommendation that development within the floodplain receive PC review. Discussion also addresses seawalls and other shoreline issues. Members agree these broader policy questions should be addressed through the upcoming review of steep slopes, tree clearing, erosion, shoreline, and wetlands rather than through the current rewrite. Staff will make minor language and FEMA map-reference updates but no major policy changes.
Discussion of Section 8.03 addresses state-level protections for mineral mining and Shanafelt's comments regarding potential impacts on sensitive natural features. Staff notes that significant impacts to the bay could potentially constitute a serious consequence under the applicable standards. No changes are made at this time.

Discussion focuses on steep-slope and grading regulations, including whether the Township's standards should be more restrictive than the County's. Members question the need for a 15% threshold when County regulations begin at 20%, while others emphasize the Township's unique topography and the need for greater review of larger developments. Members agree the issue requires a broader, more comprehensive discussion. Discussion reviews existing stormwater management language and a proposal to reduce the one-acre threshold. Members agree to retain the current language for now and address stormwater, wetlands, tree removal, and slopes through a broader review. Staff notes that separate stormwater control regulations address design criteria and engineering review, while the zoning ordinance establishes the requirement for stormwater to remain on site. Members briefly review the existing provision regarding removal of fruit, berries, and other agricultural plants from properties being developed. Discussion notes the provision's role in maintaining agricultural production and preventing pest issues. No changes are proposed. Members review the lighting amendment which is currently before the Township Board. No further discussion occurs.

Members review the landscaping section and Shanafelt's comment regarding adding autumn olive to the list of undesirable species. Discussion supports having the Township Board adopt the list by resolution, allowing it to be updated as the state's list of invasive species changes rather than amending the zoning ordinance each time. Members review Article 9, including the process for uses not specifically listed, ADA parking requirements, snow storage, and driveway standards. Members support adding an ADA reference/chart and retaining the current snow-storage provisions. Discussion also addresses the 1,000-foot residential driveway maximum and shared driveways, particularly for existing properties. Staff will clarify which provisions are currently in the zoning code and which are new language from the 2019 rewrite.

c. Draft Zoning ordinance – Article 3, 4, 6

Members review the proposed Community Facilities District which would require individual rezoning requests. Discussion also addresses showing the airport overlay on the zoning map for informational purposes.

Members review the permitted-use chart and agree that blank spaces should remain, with clarification that blank spaces indicate uses which are not permitted. Discussion includes mineral mining as potentially requiring an SUP and the need to revisit the organization of permitted and special uses in the commercial districts. Data centers are identified as an emerging issue for future consideration.

Discussion clarifies that higher-density multifamily uses (three or more units) were not intended to be added as SUPs in the A or single-family residential districts. Duplexes will remain permitted where currently allowed, while any higher-density housing district would require further consideration.

Members also revisit mining and topsoil removal for off-site use, including whether these uses should require a SUP. Given state limitations on local regulation, members agree to leave the current language in place for now and revisit the issue as needed. Discussion also addresses maximum lot coverage and building height, with the 38-foot standard replacing story-based limits and exceptions retained for agricultural buildings, silos, steeples, and similar structures. Members review Sections 3.08–3.12, with the 38-foot building height standard replacing story-based limits. Discussion addresses recreational vehicle storage in the C1 district, clarifying that personal RV storage is not a separate use and commercial RV storage may fall under permitted outdoor storage.

Section 3.13 is reviewed for the Community Facilities District, including the 38-foot building height standard and removal of story limits. Members discuss whether exceptions may be needed for public buildings with auditoriums, churches, or similar structures, and staff will review the existing height exceptions and confirm that the provisions do not create unintended nonconforming situations.

Members review section 3.14, noting that most language is existing, with a new statement of purpose. The recently adopted shoreline regulations will replace the current language, and staff will verify the correct final version, including references to high-water marks, FEMA floodplain determinations, and related dates and amendment numbers. Discussion addresses the prohibition on septic systems in shoreline areas and potential conflicts with County Health Department approvals. Members agree the provision may require legal review due to potential property-rights concerns.

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Members discuss commercial forestry and its relationship to the future review of steep slopes and tree removal. The existing language will remain for now, with the broader forestry and tree-removal issues addressed later. Section 3.16 is reviewed regarding future building sites associated with conservation easements and the PDR program. Staff will verify that the terminology is consistent with the PDR ordinance and make any necessary wording clarification. Members discuss the minimum building width requirement for principal structures, noting that the current 24-foot minimum does not apply in the Agricultural District. Discussion considers whether this creates an unintended allowance for very small primary residences and whether a 24-foot minimum width should also be required in the A-1 district. Members agree that the 24-foot standard is generally appropriate but recognize that seasonal or agricultural employee housing may warrant an exception. Staff will identify the existing ordinance provisions for tenant/farm employee housing and incorporate an exception to the 24-foot minimum where applicable.

Article 6 to be discussed at the next meeting.

10. Reports & Updates - Verbal

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

Beard reports that the AAC will continue its discussion of farm stays and review its recommendations to the PC regarding agritourism and agribusiness permitted uses. The committee will also consider information presented by Concerned Citizens of Old Mission Peninsula. The AAC has been asked to reconcile differences between their recommendations and other proposed ordinance language before submitting additional recommendations, while observing guidance from the Township Attorney regarding matters that should not be discussed.

b. Township Board (Alexander)

The TB is gathering information from the Road Commission through a FOIA request regarding road discussions and repairs during a specified period. A committee is also being organized, including interested citizens and rotating Board representation, to attend Road Commission meetings and communicate Township concerns. The Road Commission is currently working on the Swaney Road culvert and plans to address the frequently flooded section farther west.

c. Non-Motorized Plan (Shipman)

Shipman reports that the Non-Motorized Plan remains in progress, with edits continuing and photos still being developed. A public hearing is scheduled for October 26.

11. Brief Public Comments: none

12. Other Matters or Comments by Planning Commission Members

Eckstein: Raises a concern regarding significant grading on a 44-acre parcel along Peninsula Drive, describing a large, elevated area with silt fencing that appears inconsistent with the reported plan for a maple syrup processing barn. Staff is not familiar with the work and will review the site and applicable permit information.
Schroeder: raises the issue of lengthy public correspondence with attachments in relation to the existing three-page packet policy. Members find the current volume manageable but note that lengthy materials received shortly before Monday meetings may limit review time. Staff will continue to provide late materials in Monday packet updates for now, with the policy and use of links for lengthy documents to be revisited if the volume becomes problematic.

13. Adjournment

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.