PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

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Planning Commission
December 2, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Township Hall
Minutes

1. **Call to Order by Beard at 7:00 p.m.**
1. **Pledge**
2. **Roll Call – Present:** Beard, Hall, Hornberger, Shanafelt, Shipman; **Excused/Absent:** Alexander
3. **Approve Agenda**

Motion by Shipman to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Shanafelt. **Motion Passes**

4. **Brief Citizen Comments: none**
5. **Communications: Beard** notes receipt of email received today regarding shoreline as well as communication from resident, Craig Haddox, regarding the substantial improvement requirement of the special use permit process. It will be shared as part of the public record at the next regular meeting.
6. **Conflict of Interest**

Hall discloses that he represents a client whose property is being considered as a potential fire station site and requested to recuse himself from the related special use permit item. Members discuss whether a true conflict existed, noting no financial benefit to Hall, but supports his decision to avoid any appearance of impropriety. By consensus, the Commission approves his recusal for Item 10A~~., during which he will step away from the dais.~~

7. **Approve Meeting Minutes**
    a. **November 4, 2025 Planning Commission Regular Meeting**

The Commission received a late memo identifying corrections to the draft minutes included in the packet.
Motion by Hornberger to approve the minutes as amended by the memo, seconded by Hall.

Motion Passes

8. **Planner Report**

Loud: announces that current Township Zoning Administrator Sara Kopriva will assume the contract planner role beginning in January, ensuring continuity while the township recruits a full-time Planning and Zoning Administrator. Ms. Kopriva's longstanding experience with the township and knowledge of the zoning ordinance and rewrite process are expected to support a smooth transition. Because she is unavailable on the current meeting dates, the PC will need to adjust its meeting schedule; this topic will be discussed later in the agenda. Loud also previews the evening's agenda items.
Hall requests an update on the shoreline regulations, noting that a small working group expected to meet to review the draft ordinance but has not yet been convened. Loud reports that the shoreline ordinance remains under attorney review, which has delayed the planned small-group meeting. A session with the attorney and working group is being scheduled, with the goal of bringing the ordinance back to the PC in January/February and completing the process before the boating season. Hall stresses the need for the attorney to prioritize this work. Once revisions are received, the ordinance will return to the full Commission—either directly for public hearing if changes are minor, or for additional discussion if more substantial.

9. **Business**
    a. **Public Hearing: SUP #144 for construction of new Fire Station #1**

Hall leaves the dais. **Loud** introduces the application, noting the updated findings of fact, revised materials from the Fire Department, and the statutory requirement for the Planning Commission to act within 35 days. The applicant's engineer, Mark Maguire (GFA) outlines site conditions, fill and grading needs, building access, and parking improvements. Commissioners ask~~ed~~ clarifying questions regarding alternative parcels, regulatory reviews, and site design. The Fire Chief confirmed previous site evaluations and stated that the township had directed the project to proceed at the current location. No major concerns were raised by commissioners.

Motion to close the regular meeting and open the public hearing made by Hornberger, seconded by Shipman.

Motion Passes

Seth Johnson, 324 Knollwood Drive: representative from Cunningham-Limp expresses strong support for the proposed fire station project, noting the firm's longstanding involvement and the benefits of a modern, efficient, and environmentally conscious facility. States that several members of the company's leadership reside on the peninsula and emphasized their commitment to the project.

Motion to close the public hearing and reopen the regular meeting made by Shipman, seconded by Shanafelt.

Motion Passes

Motion to recommend approval of SUP #144 to the town board made by Shanafelt, seconded by Shipman.

Motion Passes

Commissioners express support for the proposed fire station, noting the high-quality engineering and design, the appropriateness of the location for emergency response, and the community's strong backing of the project. Although the site presents topographic challenges, members agreed the application is thorough, consistent with the Master Plan, and meets all special use permit standards.

Roll Call Vote: Beard: Yes**; Hall:** Yes**; Hornberger:** Yes**; Shanafelt:** Yes**; Shipman:** Yes**;**

Motion Passes Unanimously

Loud notes the Township Board will receive the recommendation at its next available meeting and will conduct its own public hearing. **Hall** rejoins the dais.

b. **Nominate Planning Commission Representative to Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission Secretary**

Commission opens nominations for Planning Commission Secretary. Shanafelt volunteers, and with no other nominations offered, the Commission votes to appoint him as Secretary. Commission then sought a volunteer to serve as the Planning Commission's representative to the Zoning Board of Appeals. No members were able to take on the role at this time, and the item was deferred to the January meeting.

c. **Confirm 2026 Meeting Dates**

i. Planning Commission Regular Meeting

Commission reviews proposed adjustments to its meeting schedule to accommodate the incoming planner's availability. Following discussion, PC agrees to hold a special meeting on January 5, followed by special meetings on the first Thursday of every month until fiscal year meeting schedule has ended in March, at which point the 2026 fiscal year meeting schedule will reflect the meeting day change.

ii. Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Regular Meeting

Commission reviews possible dates and settles on second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m.

d. **Zoning Amendment Rewrite Discussion**

i. **Amendment 201 – 40 Acres**

Discussion: reviews draft ordinance revisions and discusses the Agricultural Advisory Committee's recommendation to standardize all farm-processing categories at 40 acres. Members examined the original rationale for the 40/50/60-acre structure, potential unintended consequences of shifting all uses to 40 acres, and implications for active-production requirements, parcel configuration, and setbacks. Commissioners emphasized the need to understand how such a change would affect the number of parcels eligible for high-intensity uses. Loud will return with acreage distribution data and further analysis before additional revisions are drafted.

ii. **Signage**

Discussion: reviews the draft sign ordinance prepared by McKenna, noting the need to comply with the Reed v. Gilbert decision by regulating signs based on size, location, duration, and lighting rather than content. Members discussed potential allowance of feather flags and sandwich boards subject to limits on number, size, placement, and safety; extending the display period for short-term event signs (with removal required shortly after events); and setting reasonable limits on the number of flags per pole and overall, on a site. Discussion over home-occupation signage (with no consensus to change current practice), agricultural "seasonal" and off-premises signs, and incidental on-farm signs (with concern about unnecessary permits and limits). Inflatable, air-activated devices were confirmed as prohibited, with clarification needed to ensure temporary holiday décor remains exempt. Staff will work with McKenna to refine language, correct inconsistencies, and prepare a clearer analysis of how the proposed standards would apply in residential and agricultural districts for future Commission review and public hearing.

iii. **ADU**

Discussion: reviews draft language to allow accessory dwelling units throughout the township (in agricultural and residential districts, with limited applicability in commercial areas where there is an existing dwelling), provided all existing dimensional, lot coverage, septic, and setback standards are met. Members affirm the goal of enabling multi-generational housing and additional long-term living space without changing neighborhood scale or character, discussed limits on ADUs accessory to two-family dwellings, and emphasize that ADUs are not to be rented. Commission requests that the non-rental prohibition be made more prominent and asks staff and township attorney to develop an appropriate enforcement and fine framework.

iiii. **Backyard Chickens**

Discussion: reviews draft standards for permitting backyard chickens in residential areas. Members agree that chickens may be allowed, subject to limits on the number of birds, required setbacks, and coop placement. Support for allowing chickens only—not other fowl—and notes that shoreline properties would need larger setbacks to align with existing waterfront regulations. Overall, the draft provisions were viewed as reasonable and consistent with best practices.

10. Reports and Updates – Verbal

a. **Agricultural Advisory Committee**

Beard reports Committee is developing recommendations to accommodate small producers operating on parcels under 40 acres—such as maple syrup or vinegar operations—that currently lack a path for necessary processing facilities. A subcommittee is preparing draft concepts for discussion at the committee's upcoming meeting. The AAC also remains interested in seeing progress on the agritourism ordinance it previously submitted for PC review and will seek an update on its status.

b. **Township Board: none**

c. **Non-Motorized Plan**

Shipman: work continues on the draft non-motorized plan, with efforts focused on refining materials and preparing for public review. The goal is to complete the plan within the first six months of next year.

11. Brief Citizen Comments (Please keep comments to 3 minutes per person)

Sally Erickson, 2228 Kaukauna Court: expresses appreciation for the Commission's clarification on shoreline frontage regulations and provides background on longstanding concerns regarding overuse and boating activity adjacent to her development. Notes that earlier approvals in 2001 enforced a one-boat-per-50-feet standard and stated that safety, property rights, and diminished property value remain central concerns due to increased boat traffic and neighboring marina activity. Highlights challenges with past enforcement efforts and urges the PC to consider site-specific conditions and safety impacts as it continues its work on waterfront regulations.

Katharine Pike, 6095 Red Fox Run: expresses concern that proposed changes to shoreline regulations—particularly increasing the number of allowed watercraft—would undermine the rural character the township strives to protect. Describes significant safety concerns at the East Bay shoreline due to high boat density from an adjacent association, noting that she no longer feels safe swimming or using non-motorized watercraft. Urges the Commission to ensure that any adopted regulations include clear, consistent, and enforceable provisions, with meaningful penalties for violations, emphasizing that past rules were not adequately enforced.
Howard Pike, 6095 Red Fox Run: addresses shoreline ordinance rewrite, focusing on safety and enforceability. Drawing on professional experience as an orthopedic surgeon who treated severe boat-propeller injuries, he emphasizes the predictable and devastating risks posed when motorized boats operate near swimmers, kayakers, and paddle boarders. Urges the Commission to avoid increasing boat density near shore and to minimize situations where swimmers and motorized watercraft intermingle. Also recommends that any revised ordinance clearly address dock location and orientation to ensure boats enter and exit toward deeper water rather than parallel to the shoreline, and that the standards be written to allow straightforward, consistent enforcement.

12. Other Matters or Comments by Planning Commission Members

Commission briefly reviewed a memo summarizing best practices for protecting steep slopes, trees, and wetlands. Staff clarified that the research and memo were prepared by the department's new planning and zoning assistant, Jenna Beattie, whose work was commended. These topics are included in the broader zoning rewrite project plan and may be prioritized for development of draft ordinance language.

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Shipman, seconded by Hall. **Motion Passes**

Meeting Adjourned at 9:23 p.m.