

WRIGHT TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
January 20, 2025- 7:30 P.M.
TOWNSHIP OFFICE – 2024 CLEVELAND STREET EAST - COOPERSVILLE, MI 49404
<https://wrighttownshipottawami.gov>

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30p.m. by Chair Rich Dausman. Also present at the meeting were Commissioners, Steve Gray, Ken Zahm, Tyler Austin, and Secretary Brad Anderson. With no members absent. Planner Alexis Gulker from Fresh Coast Planning was present for support and to take minutes of the meeting.
2. Dausman stated they no longer need to announce the no parking in the reserved fire spaces since they have moved to the new Township Hall.
3. Anderson motioned to approve the agenda. Gray seconded. All ayes, motion carried.
4. Approval of minutes dated October 21, 2024. Anderson motioned to approve the October 21, 2024, minutes. Gray seconded. Ayes: Gray, Dausman, Anderson, Zahm. Nays: no one. Abstains: Austin abstains due to not being at the meeting in October since he was not on the Planning Commission yet. Motion carries.
5. Public Comments; None
6. New Business:
 - a. Election of Planning Commission Officers

Anderson motioned for Rich Dausman to be Chair, Gray seconded, all ayes motion carried.
Zahm motioned for Tyler Austin to be Vice Chair. Gray motioned for Ken Zahm to be Vice Chair. Roll call vote for Tyler Austin to be Vice Chair, Ayes: Dausman, Anderson, and Zahm. Roll call vote for Ken Zahm to be vice chair, Ayes: Gray. Motion carried for Tyler Austin to be Vice Chair.
Gray motioned for Brad Anderson to be Secretary, Dausman seconded, all ayes motioned carried.

- b. Public Hearing- Benji Studio Special Land Use- 14641 16th Avenue – Small Events Center

Discussion between Commissioners and Alexis Gulker regarding the application. The applicant representing Benji Studio was not present due to the weather. Alexis Gulker explained the proposed use to the existing building. Commissioners held discussion with Alexis Gulker regarding the proposed plan and questions they had about parking and conditions.

Public hearing opened on 7:44. More discussion held between Commissioners regarding the application.

A resident named Sara asked why no parking on 16th avenue is allowed for the use?

Alexis Gulker and Rich Dausman stated that the Road Commission has signs in front of the building that says, “No parking” and because of the four ways stop right by there.

Dausman motioned to close the public hearing at 7:50pm.

Anderson motioned to approve the proposed use to the existing lower level of building as presented

with the following conditions:

1. Should the intensity of use for any of the businesses increase, or if complaints are received regarding parking in this area, shared parking shall be reviewed and modified by the Zoning Administrator.
2. Dumpster screening shall be required if a dumpster is placed outside.
3. No events shall take place in the lower level of the building at the same time as dance classes taking place in the upper level of the building.
4. A shared Parking Agreement shall be implemented with the upper-level use, the new proposed lower-level use, JWL Properties LLC (Insurance Company 14641 16th Ave) and Marne's Lion Club (1580 Arch Street).
5. Parking on the east side of the building off 16th Avenue shall be prohibited.

Zahm seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

c. Public Hearing – Special Land Use Renewal - 70-06-27-300-017 - Dykstra Excavating

Alex Drew from Dykstra Excavating summarized the application and explained it has been slower progress than they originally thought, and they are thinking it will take another five years to complete now.

Dausman asked the applicant what complaints have happened in the past with the site?

Alex Drew stated they have received complaints about the roads getting dirty and about illegal dumping but that hasn't happened for at least three to four years and after those complaints were received, they put in a fence and signs.

Discussion between Commissioners. Dausman motioned to open the public hearing at 7:57 p.m.

A resident named Sara who lives in front of the site gave history of the property and how Sand creek runs in the back of the property on the east side. Sara then talked about the dumping of trash back in 2020 and how if they are allowed to continue to dump here the loads should be controlled.

A resident named Paul who lives down the street stated he wants to keep Sand Creek clean, and he pays taxes to keep it clean. He stated how the property uses to be a landfill and how the water could get contaminated if the landfill underneath is disturbed because of where they are wanting to dump it is on top of the old landfill. He stated he wants the land to be left be and no more dumping.

Discussion between Commissioners and residents regarding the fill and the concerns of the old land fill and it possibly contaminating Sand Creek on the east side of the property and the land surrounding it.

Anderson questions how will the PC know if the applicant is dumping clean fill? In the past three years they never did a site inspection of the site.

Alex Drew said they dump clean fill there and they never dig into the ground they only place it on top, so they aren't disturbing any of the existing trash in the ground from the old landfill.

Austin asked what they could do in the future to this property could they even build on an old landfill?

The resident Paul said no they can't build on top of an old landfill.

A resident named Steve stated his concerns with flooding from it being filled and where the water will go.

Anderson asked about the water drainage.

Alex Drew explained the water drainage of the site and the plan they have to follow.

Discussion about where landfill was located back in 1950's-1990's.

Alex Drew explained the end of the fill area ends before the ponds and it is quite a distance away and they aren't dumping trash they are dumping clean fill.

Alexis Gulker stated to the Commissioners it is possible for the PC to put a condition on the site to have them schedule annual site visits to make sure the dumping is clean, in fact the Township Engineer recommended that.

Dausman summarized the residents' concerns.

Supervisor VanTimmeren in the audience stated he doesn't know if fill should be put on top of the old landfill or if the dump should be dug up and get it out of there, whatever is down there could leach further into the dirt. Maybe EGLE or DNR should be more involved.

The resident Paul said it is contained right now, and it would be a nightmare to try to dig it all up and it would be too big of a project.

Gray asked if the wells are being monitored?

Supervisor VanTimmeren stated the DNR doesn't monitor the wells anymore.

More discussion between the residents, Alexis Gulker, and the Commissioners regarding the wells, landfill, and monitoring what they are dumping.

Dausman motioned to close the public hearing at 8:56pm.

Dausman motioned to recommend the PC table the application until more information is gathered by the Board of Trustees from the DNR and the County regarding the properties wells and old landfill to make sure it is safe to be doing what the applicant is proposing and if putting new test wells in is a possibility or needed.

Gray seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

d. 2025 Planning Commission Schedule

Anderson motioned to approve the 2025 Planning Commission Schedule Resolution.

Austin seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

7. Old Business:

a. Tallmadge Township Fence Ordinance Example

Discussion between Commissioners and Alexis Gulker regarding the Tallmadge Township Fence ordinance. The commission decides they would like the ordinance to pertain to the Village, High Density and Medium Density zoning districts and would like the text amendment ordinance brought to them for a public hearing in March.

9. Commissioner Comments: Gray stated on the north side of the road across from the dance studio building there are purple bushes that are too tall so you can't see when pulling out. Supervisor VanTimmeren stated the office has received complaints about the bushes, and they are handling it with PCI who does the Townships enforcement.

Anderson asked if the low hanging wires were ever addressed that they talked about in October. Supervisor VanTimmeren stated he spoke with Consumers Energy about wires being too low over Cleveland and 8th Avenue and will continue to have conversations with them.

Planning Commission members welcome Tyler Austin as new PC member and as Vice Chair.

10. Township Board comments: Anderson stated the Board of Trustees has not been that busy and that they will begin budget meetings soon. The board has appointed Tyler Austin as a Zoning Board of appeals members.
11. Gray motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m., Zahm seconded, all ayes motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Alexis Gulker Planner / Any documents referenced in these minutes are on file in the Clerk's office.