

WRIGHT TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 17, 2025- 7:30 P.M.
TOWNSHIP OFFICE – 2024 CLEVELAND STREET EAST - COOPERSVILLE, MI 49404
<https://wrighttownshipottawami.gov>
Minutes approved at April 21st, 2025 Board Meeting

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, Vice Chair 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. Anderson motioned to approve the agenda. Gray seconded. All ayes, motion carried.
3. Approval of minutes dated January 20, 2025. Anderson motioned to approve the January 20, 2025, minutes with the date change to reflect the year 2025 and to remove “Jack” from Dykstra Excavating. Austin seconded. All ayes, motion carried.
4. Public Comments:
 - Patrick Brechting representing 705 Roosevelt Farm Labor Camp stated he would like to have a conversation with the Planning Commission regarding the zoning ordinance and farm labor camps. The Planning Commission agreed to have a conversation at the end of the meeting.
 - Kyle Visker stated he would like to have a conversation with the Planning Commission regarding the zoning ordinance and to develop a school, church, and adult foster care facility all on one parcel. The Planning Commission agreed to have a conversation at the end of the meeting
5. New Business:
 - a. Public Hearing – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Section: 331 Fences, Hedges, Walls, and Privacy Screens

Alexis Gulker explains the zoning text amendment ordinance to the commissioners. Dausman read the zoning text amendment for the audience. Dausman asked to make it clearer to include “hedges, privacy screens” too in the text amendment.

Dausman motioned to open the public hearing at 7:52p.m.

Zach Sweers asked the Planning Commission if barbed wire fences would be grandfathered in right now? Alexis Gulker stated yes, they would be until the property updated their fence.

Rick Loyal that lives by 32nd and Cleveland Street asked if their electrical fence would be allowed for horses for an agricultural use? Alexis Gulker answered yes it would be allowed it's an agricultural use.

Jean Loyal asked how does this pertain to side yard setbacks? Alexis Gulker and Dausman answered it doesn't the Township will just want to make sure it doesn't go on a neighboring property.

Bob Roskamp asked if surveyors have to stake out land and what about properties on lakes? Dausman asked what Crockery Lake did in Chester Township? Alexis Gulker stated she will look into the law about right of way of lakes and what Chester Township did.

Discussion between commissioners regarding proposed text amendment.

Dausman motioned to close the public hearing at 8:13p.m.

Gray motioned to table the zoning text amendment to discuss further next month. Austin seconded; all ayes motioned carried.

6. Old Business; None

9. Commissioner Comments:

- Informal conversation: Kyle Visker of Land and Resource Engineering (LRE) is looking at the property in Wright Township at Arthur and Kenowa 70-06-25-200-002 it is 40 acres and is currently vacant, it is zoned Agricultural Preservation. He stated the plan is to do a school K-12, a bus garage and a proposed senior center (adult foster care), not showing a church yet, but down the road church could be added later. But the adult foster care only allows for six in the zoning ordinance, they would like twenty adults instead.

Anderson stated he does not think it's in the right place for the township.

Zahm stated there is no public utilities either so that's a negative and we need to protect agricultural land Gray stated he wants to preserve farmland.

Alexis Gulker stated the permitted uses are allowed and explains the process of their path forward.

Anderson stated he would like to know what the neighbors would think of it.

- Informal conversation: Patrick Brechting- 705 Roosevelt representing the owner, stated they would like to go down to one building instead of six for their farm labor housing. Lawrence Williams Monzono LLC is the owner and has been doing the business since 2015, the camp is fifty years old and provides farm labor housing for off-site farming. He explained the use and explanations of the request. He wants one hundred-fifty-four people. The new building is more energy efficient. He explained how the times have changed and would like to have the ordinance updated.

Dausman asked what makes the use nonconforming? Alexis Gulker stated because they are doing farm labor housing on one site and the work is done on a different site and that is not allowed in the zoning ordinance. Also, the Zoning Ordinance allows for farm labor housing for over 100 people as a special use, so they have to do a special land use.

Dausman asked how does it work for women? Lawrence stated women do not come, they have accommodations for women if needed though.

Dausman explained the reasons for the old ordinance and why it was adopted. The concern was if it was allowed how do they prohibit the Township from becoming the metropolitan of thousands of farm labor housing lots.

Dausman would like to create some type of ordinance to relax the restraint of nonconforming uses or nonconforming buildings.

Discussion between commissioners and Lawrence and Patrick.

The Planning Commission directed Alexis Gulker to create a rough draft of ordinance language that allows nonconforming uses to go to the Planning Commission for review.

Ken Zahm brought up Hayes and Service drive on the north side of the expressway how a three way stop needs to go in, the Road Commission needs to know about it.

10. Township Board comments: Anderson stated Steering Committee meeting is April 8th at 5:30pm, anyone is welcome to attend, it is open to the public.
11. Anderson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:33p.m., Gray 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.