

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP</b>  <b>PLANNING COMMISSION</b>  <b>Regular Meeting</b>  <b>7:00 p.m.</b>  <b>April 16, 2026</b>  <b>Yankee Springs Township Hall</b>  <b>284 North Briggs Road, Middleville, Michigan 49333</b>  <b>MINUTES</b></p>	<p><b>MINUTES</b>  Page 1 of 5 PC  <b>APPROVED: __</b>  Regular PC Mtg.  April 16, 2026</p>
<p>Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Planning Commission Chair, Shana Bush.</p> <p><b><u>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Roll Call:</u></b> Present: Bush, Craven, Fiala, Frigmanski, Knowles, Smith, Trygier.  7 Present; 0 Absent</p> <p><b><u>Staff Present:</u></b> Dennis Buist, Sandy Marcukaitis, Joe Shea  <b><u>Visitors:</u></b> 48</p>	<p><b>CALL TO ORDER</b></p> <p><b>PLEDGE</b></p> <p><b>ROLL CALL</b></p>
<p><b><u>APPROVAL OF AGENDA:</u></b>  <b><u>Adds/Changes:</u></b> Ms. Bush proposes to remove the discussion of the Burn Ordinance from the agenda.</p> <p><i>Motion by Fiala with support from Frigmanski to approve the Agenda as amended.</i>  <i>All AYES. <b>MOTION CARRIED.</b></i></p> <hr/> <p><b><u>REPORTS from REPRESENTATIVES:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Board of Trustees- Larry Knowles</u></b>  Board Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Mining Ordinance was approved.</li> <li>● There was a special meeting with Peerless for the water project.</li> <li>● Approved the contract with Peerless.</li> <li>● Spring Clean-Up day is changed to April 25.</li> <li>● Passed a resolution to place a fire millage on the ballot.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>ZBA, John Frigmanski</u></b>  No report.</p> <hr/> <p><b><u>ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Joe Shea, ZA</u></b>  Mr. Shea thanked the Planning Commission for their work on the Mining Ordinance.</p> <p><b><u>PUBLIC COMMENT:</u></b> <i>(Non-agenda matters) - (Limit to 3 minutes per person-Additional comments under item 11)</i>  None</p> <hr/> <p><b><u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES:</u></b> Regular Meeting of March 19, 2026  <i>Motion by Fiala with support from Frigmanski to accept the Minutes of the March 19, 2026, meeting as presented.</i></p>	<p><b>APPROVAL OF AGENDA</b></p> <p><b>BOARD REPORTS from REPRESENTATIVES</b></p> <p><b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT</b></p> <p><b>ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT</b></p> <p><b>PUBLIC COMMENT</b></p> <p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b></p>

All AYES. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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**INQUIRY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

**ROLL CALL:** *F. Fiala asked the PC members present if there was any conflict of any PC member with the agenda of requests and as modified this evening.  
PC members noted: No: 6, Yes: 1.  
Noted: Nikki Smith stated a conflict as she has a relationship with both parties for New Business Item 2.*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. C SPR 26-03-01; Parcel ID: 16-023-009-00**, 8551 Deep Lake Road, Middleville, MI 49333, Sharp Park Campground, a commercial business located on property zoned RC, Resort and Recreation. The owner of the property, Terry VanRhee, is requesting site plan review for a proposed residential structure on this property pursuant to the *Yankee Springs Township Ordinance, Article V Site Plan Review*.

Mr. VanRhee is present and states that he owns and manages the Campground and is looking to build a residence on that property.

**Discussion:**

Input from Joe Shea: The plan appears to comply with the ordinance.

Public Hearing Open at 7:07 pm

No comment.

Public Hearing Closed at 7:07 pm

*Motion by Fiala with support from Knowles to approve the site plan review for a proposed residential structure at 8551 Deep Lake Road, Middleville, MI 49333 pursuant to the Yankee Springs Township Ordinance, Article V Site Plan Review.*

*Roll Call Vote: Trygier, Yes; Smith, Yes; Knowles, Yes; Frigmanski, Yes; Craven, Yes; Fiala, Yes.*

All AYES. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Planning Commission member Nikki Smith left the room at this time.

- 2. ZOC 26-03-01; Parcel IDs: 16-019-401-00 and 16-019-402-00**, Vacant parcels on Edwin Drive, Wayland, MI 49348. The owner of the parcels, Shashin Kothawala, is requesting that the parcels be re-zoned from Rural Residential (RR) to Commercial (C-3) pursuant to the *Yankee Springs Township Zoning Ordinance Article XIX, Amendments to Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map*.

Mr. Kothawala is present and states that he is a long time resident of Gun Lake. He is looking to build a storage facility. The zoning needs to change to allow that. He feels he is offering a good looking plan that will benefit the community.

**INQUIRY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**C SPR 26-03-01;  
Parcel ID:  
16-023-009-00**

**Public Hearing**

**Site Plan Review  
Approved**

**ZOC 26-03-01;  
Parcel IDs:  
16-019-401-00 and  
16-019-402-00.**

**Discussion:**

Zoning Administrator, Joe Shea, states his findings as follows: We have received about 15 emails from residents and several phone calls. The Planning Commission has read all of them and is aware of the community concerns. Mr. Shea gave some background on the split of those two lots to be residential use. This rezoning (in his opinion) would be inconsistent with the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map (of 2019). If Edwin Dr. parcels are rezoned to C-3 Commercial, any future persons could put in a commercial business. There is other commercial property available in the township at present. The public opposition to this request has been significant. No emails or phone calls in favor of the project have been received.

*Motion by Fiala with support from Frigmanski to open a Public Hearing regarding ZOC 26-03-01; Parcel IDs: 16-019-401-00 and 16-019-402-00, Vacant parcels on Edwin Drive, Wayland, MI 49348.*

**All AYES. MOTION CARRIED.**

Public Hearing Open at 7:15 pm

**Nancy Viviano**, 1624 Parker, is on the Board of the Big Meadow Condos. She states that all of the residents have been assured that this would be residential. It would not be good for the landscape or the people on Edwin Drive.

**Jenny Ward**, 1609 Archwood, states that both parcels are immediately behind her house. She is absolutely opposed to this. It would not be good for her neighborhood.

**Rhonda White**, Edwin Drive. We have multiple children playing and people bicycling in the neighborhood and don't want to see commercial buildings. She is worried about the welfare of the children, and adding more traffic onto a narrow road is not necessary.

**Paul Kennedy**, Lakeridge Drive. He owned a cottage on Edwin Dr for 20 years, and feels this is totally inappropriate.

**Jenn Pollock**, 1771 Edwin Dr. She states she is in opposition to this, feels it is a safety issue, and also concerned that down the road there would be an additional change in commercial activity.

**Mike Cunningham**, Heritage Bay Drive. Mike states that the original purpose of the split was for residential use. He would zone according to the Future Land Use map and keep it residential.

**RJ Clark**, 1623 Archwood. He has been here since 1998, and is in the direct sight line of the lights from the car wash. He likes Michigan and the natural beauty and speaks against the rezoning to commercial use. He does not want the additional noise from adding storage units.

*Motion by Fiala with support from Frigmanski to close the Public Hearing.*  
**All AYES. MOTION CARRIED.**

Public Hearing Closed at 7:24 pm

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**Public Hearing**

Discussion:

Clarification on the number of storage units - seven.

Mr. Kothawala intends to sell off the units, not rent them out.

The possibility that rezoning to C-3 will open this land up to other commercial opportunities in the future is a concern. The Future Land Use Map of the township states that these parcels remain residential.

**Mr. Lee Crocker**, attorney, speaks and states that Mr. Kothawala is sensitive to the concerns of the community. He asks for additional time to respond to the issues raised, including the issue that the C-3 is a problem that could potentially be worked out.

*Motion by Knowles with support from Craven to deny the request to re-zone from Rural Residential (RR) to Commercial (C-3) pursuant to the Yankee Springs Township Zoning Ordinance Article XIX, Amendments to Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map.*

Discussion:

Mr. Fiala states though the intention is well done, his concern is the location. These commercial endeavors are a good thing for the community in the right location. He commends the owner for his initiative.

*Roll Call Vote: Craven, Yes; Bush, Yes; Trygier, Yes; Frigmanski, Yes; Knowles, Yes; Fiala, Yes. (absent: Smith)*  
**6 AYES. 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.**

Ms. Bush states that it is commendable what the owner is trying to do for the township, but the location is the problem.

Planning Commission member Nikki Smith rejoined the Planning Commission at this time.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. Discussion of Bylaws**

Ms. Bush referred to a document titled Planning Commission By-Laws and Rules of Procedure.

Several matters were discussed, including whether a commissioner with a conflict must leave the room during a related discussion or can stay in the room and not participate in the discussion, specifications of executive session, and meetings procedure.

Ms. Bush questioned whether the Rules of Conduct are printed on the opposite side of the printed Meeting Agenda. It was agreed this should be done in the future.

Rules of Conduct were discussed in relation to the Public Comment, and agreement made that the topic can be whatever the speaker desires to speak on, while the Public Hearing must pertain to the specific topic.

*Motion by Fiala with support by Trygier to accept the changes that were discussed.*

*Roll Call Vote: Trygier, Yes; Smith, Yes; Knowles, Yes; Frigmanski, Yes; Fiala, Yes; Bush, Yes.*

**ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.**

**2. Discussion of Work Plan**

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**Re-Zoning  
Request Denied**

**Old Business**

**DISCUSSION OF  
BYLAWS**

**DISCUSSION OF  
WORK PLAN**

**OTHER SUCH  
BUSINESS**

Mr. Knowles was asked if the Board of Trustees has approved several special working meetings for the Planning Commission in the future. He noted that he brought it up at their last meeting but no decision was made.

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**OTHER SUCH BUSINESS AS MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

- There are laws at the state level for fire, wetlands & permanent docks. Mr. Fiala would like to put a reference to the State Level guidelines on our website for township residents.
- Members of the Commission are opposed to relying on that for Permanent Docks and suggest having something clear and consistent for the township. The dock issue is an enforcement issue for us. Mr. Shea noted that the Township lost a case on appeal last week. Several Planning Commission members feel that the Township can be more specific in the language of their permanent dock ordinance.
- The State has rules and regulations regarding docks, boat houses, swim rafts, etc.
- Planning Commission members discussed cleaning up the language in our ordinance and also referring to the Michigan State regulations. This will be addressed in the Work Plan.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** (3 minute limit)

**Mike Cunningham**, Heritage Bay Dr. In regards to the Conflict of Interest, he states that this is included in the oath of office and doesn't feel it needs to be asked at each meeting. He feels it is important for the group to consult an expert on this subject. As for docks, he would stay away from regulating it because the state controls it.

Public Comment closed at 7:55 pm.

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Additional Comment: None

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**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Motion by Bush with support from Knowles to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm.*

*All AYES. MOTION CARRIED.*

Approved by: Frank Fiala 6/1/26  
Frank Fiala, Planning Commission Secretary Date

Respectfully submitted by  
Diane Dykgraaf, Recording Secretary