

**PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Regular Meeting – May 19, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Kerby called the Paw Paw Township Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

PRESENT: Chairman Kip Kerby, Chad Learned, Phillip Arbanas, Jim DeGroff, Phil Hover, Chuck Felcyn

ABSENT: Adam Garland

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed meeting agenda. Jirousek previously mentioned that SolAmerica had requested a second extension of their special land use and site plan approval, and that it was up to the Planning Commission to determine whether it should be placed on the agenda.

- DeGroff offered a motion *not to add the SolAmerica extension to the agenda*.
- Arbanas supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion did not pass (3-3)
- Learned offered a motion *to approve the agenda as presented in the packet*.
- DeGroff supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).
 - Aye: Chairman Kerby, Learned, Arbanas, DeGroff, Hover, Felcyn
 - Nay: none
 - Abstain: none

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft minutes from March 17, 2026.

- Hover offered a motion *to approve the minutes from the meeting held on March 17, 2026*.
- Felcyn supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).
 - Aye: Chairman Kerby, Learned, Arbanas, DeGroff, Hover, Felcyn
 - Nay: none
 - Abstain: none

5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- Mr. Hurel Johnson, representing SolAmerica, stated that the Paw Paw Village Solar Project was originally supported through a federal financial assistance package that is no longer available, creating additional financial challenges for the project. He explained that they are currently working with the USDA and evaluating cost reductions to improve the project's financial feasibility. Mr. Johnson further noted that their team continues to work on the project, including permitting and financing efforts. The Planning Commission discussed the project's status and considered whether additional public input was necessary or whether the request to extend the project approval for an additional year was primarily an administrative action.

6. BUSINESS

a. Consideration of a Site Plan Amendment. Drew Petro of Blackwood Storage, LLC, requests a site plan amendment to add a 13,000-square-foot self-storage building at 38656 Red Arrow, Paw Paw, MI 49079 (80-14-350-009-00).

Drew Petro and Andrew Rossell discussed the proposal to add a 13,000-square-foot storage building to the site. The team explained that the separation between the proposed building and the existing building would be approximately 10 feet and was not intended to function as a drive aisle.

Jirousek explained that the intent of the ordinance requirement for 40-foot end aisles was to provide adequate fire access and maneuverability between buildings. He stated his interpretation that a 40-foot separation between the ends of buildings was required.

Learned stated that he would be comfortable with the proposed 10-foot separation if bollards were installed to prevent vehicular access between the buildings. The Planning Commission generally expressed support for either a single, larger, extended building or separate buildings with a 10-foot separation and bollards.

- Learned offered a motion *to approve the site plan amendment with the conditions that the building would be connected or separated by 10 feet with bollards every three feet; lighting specifications would be provided; and all outside agency approvals would be secured.*
- Felcyn supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).
 - Aye: Chairman Kerby, Learned, Arbanas, DeGross, Hover, Felcyn
 - Nay: none
 - Abstain: none

b. Housing Discussion. Zoning Ordinance Update (Master Plan Implementation)

Jirousek provided an overview of the next phase of the Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program, which will focus on updating the Zoning Ordinance to implement housing-related recommendations from the draft Master Plan. He explained that the work will include reviewing residential dimensional standards, evaluating regulations related to principal and accessory dwelling units, and assessing opportunities to streamline zoning and development review procedures. The Planning Commission held a general discussion regarding potential ordinance amendments and the anticipated timeline for additional analysis and ordinance development.

7. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

8. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

The Planning Commission discussed the solar project and whether the request should require a new special land use and site plan review or be treated as an administrative extension of the existing approval. The consensus was to consider the extension request at a future meeting once all necessary materials are included in the meeting packet in advance.

DeGroff stated that the Master Plan was expected to be approved soon and noted that minor edits were needed regarding the Township's size and the number of cemeteries operated and maintained by the Township. The Planning Commission also discussed the possibility of conducting a bus tour and other gatherings that could be included in the Township budget.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 7:30 pm.

- Felcyn offered a motion *to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm.*
- Learned supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).
 - Aye: Chairman Kerby, Learned, Arbanas, DeGroff, Hover, Felcyn
 - Nay: none
 - Abstain: none

Prepared by: David Jirousek, May 2x7, 2026

Approved: