

**PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Regular Meeting – July 21, 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, Adam Garland

ABSENT: None

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed meeting agenda.

- Learned offered a motion *to approve the agenda as presented.*
- Felcyn supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).
 - Aye: Chairman Kerby, Learned, Arbanas, DeGroff, Hover, Garland, Felcyn
 - Nay: none
 - Abstain: none

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft minutes from June 16, 2026. Since the minutes were received earlier in the day, the Planning Commissioners asked that approval of the June minutes be placed on the August Planning Commission agenda.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- None

6. BUSINESS

a. Consideration of a Site Plan and Change of Use. Sabian Standish requests approval of a site plan and change of use for retail sales at 38656 Red Arrow, Paw Paw, MI 49079 (80-14-350-009-00).

Sabian Standish and Dave Shunkwiler explained the proposed change of use of a portion of the existing principal building to a retail establishment. The proposed business, Pallet Raiders, occupies approximately 2,100 square feet (Suite 2) and sells wholesale overstock, customer returns, shelf-pulls, and liquidation merchandise acquired from major retailers and distributors. The business is already operating, and retroactive approval is requested. No building expansions or other site improvements are proposed, aside from refreshed parking lot striping, accessible parking spaces, and signage.

Township Planner David Jirousek summarized the review memo and the recommended conditions of approval concerning parking lot striping, fire department approval, and lighting.

The Planning Commission also discussed the change of use process and whether future storage uses related to other businesses were required to go through the same process. Jirousek explained that any change of use requires Planning Commission approval.

- Learned offered a motion *to approve the site plan and change of use for retail sales with the following conditions:*
 1. *Submit a revised site plan showing all dimensions of the parking lot striping layout, including all parking spaces, accessible parking spaces, drive aisles, and pavement markings. Additionally, indicate the outdoor sales display area. Stripe the parking lot once approved.*
 2. *Obtain approval from the Fire Department confirming that emergency vehicle access and maneuverability around the building, parking areas, and loading areas are adequate.*
 3. *Demonstrate that the parking area is adequately illuminated if open after daylight hours and confirm that lighting complies with all applicable lighting standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Outdoor lighting must be down-lit and cut/off style.*
- Felcyn supported the motion.
- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).
 - Aye: Chairman Kerby, Learned, Arbanas, DeGross, Hover, Garland, Felcyn
 - Nay: none
 - Abstain: none

b. Zoning Ordinance Update. Pool Fencing.

The Planning Commission discussed a proposed amendment to the swimming pool barrier requirements. The amendment, drafted by the Township Attorney following discussions with the Township Supervisor, would allow alternative barrier systems permitted under state law, including automatic safety covers, as an alternative to the Township's current requirement for a minimum four-foot-high fence or other enclosure around ground-level swimming pools. The Planning Commission also discussed that many communities maintain local pool barrier requirements that exceed state minimum standards because automatic safety covers are not always closed when pools are unattended. However, the Planning Commission felt that relying on state law was appropriate. Following discussion, the

Planning Commission provided direction to proceed with the proposed amendment and set a public hearing for the August meeting.

c. Zoning Ordinance Update. Housing and Residential Zoning (Master Plan Implementation)

Township Planner David Jirousek reviewed his July 17, 2026, memorandum outlining the initial zoning ordinance assessment prepared as part of the next phase of the Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program. The memorandum focused on evaluating residential dimensional standards, increasing housing supply flexibility through revisions to principal and accessory dwelling unit regulations, and streamlining zoning review procedures. The assessment is intended to implement the Master Plan's housing recommendations while identifying potential ordinance amendments that support housing choice and affordability, preserve rural character, and improve regulatory efficiency.

The Planning Commission discussed several potential housing-related zoning amendments. Members expressed general support for exploring a reduction in the minimum dwelling size to 650 square feet and reducing the minimum dwelling width or core living area to 18 feet, but requested examples of house designs that would comply with the proposed standards before making a recommendation.

The Commission also discussed providing greater flexibility for residential accessory buildings by modestly reducing setback requirements while maintaining increased setbacks for larger buildings. The goal would be to reduce the number of special land use requests for minor setback deviations while preserving compatibility with neighboring properties.

Regarding accessory dwelling units (ADUs), the Commission supported greater flexibility for second-story ADUs, such as carriage houses, while emphasizing that the principal dwelling should remain owner-occupied. The Commission also discussed allowing administrative approval, rather than special land use approval, in certain situations involving nonconforming lots or nonconforming principal dwellings. Members further questioned whether the current maximum ADU size should be increased, provided all applicable accessory building standards are satisfied.

The Planning Commission generally agreed that commonly-owned nonconforming lots should not be forced to be combined.

Concerning Planned Unit Developments, the Planning Commission generally agreed to allow for special land use approval of a "preliminary plan" as long as final plans were also submitted for review and approval.

The Planning Commission agreed that there was no longer a need for the CSV zoning district, as there is no corresponding Future Land Use category.

The Planning Commission also agreed to assess a half-acre minimum lot size for the VE zoning district and to adopt a sliding scale for setbacks in the ARR district for nonconforming lots.

Discussion of the AGR District will continue. The Commission generally supported allowing a limited number of one- to three-acre residential lots as part of a larger agricultural parcel, while preserving the majority of the remaining land as large lots or for agricultural production. Members also generally agreed that an overall density of one dwelling unit per 10 acres was appropriate. However, additional discussion is needed regarding the minimum lot size for the remaining agricultural parcels.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

7. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

- Board member DeGroff mentioned that the Township Board is considering a moratorium on data centers, and mentioned recent fire department calls for service.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 7:30 pm.

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

Prepared by: David Jirousek, July 28, 2026

Approved: