

**FRUITLAND TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
JUNE 24, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson Warner, Commissioners Holman, Josephson, Butler, Campeau, Lundell, Huldin.

MEMBERS ABSENT

None.

AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Holman, seconded by Commissioner Huldin to accept the agenda as written.

7 AYES

MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Holman, seconded by Commissioner Campeau to accept the minutes of June 5, 2025 meeting as written.

7 AYES

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Jeff Marcinkowski 3744 Jay Road. Supervisor Marcinkowski discussed the grants that are in the process. He believes one has been approved; he has signed off on it and it is awaiting a signature by the Director. It is a 2-year grant. He applied for 2 other grants. One from the County and one from the Community foundation also. He would like to know, if all these grants fall into place, could they be used to fund the review of the master plan.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Introduction of Williams & Works as the new planning consultant. This is Tricia Anderson who is going to be our contact person.

Ms. Anderson introduced herself with Williams and Works and stated her company does planning as well as surveying and engineering services. She has been with the company for 3 years and doing various planning projects for approximately 15 years. The Planning Commission welcomed her aboard.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discuss the 5-year plan and future review with the planning consultant. The Township sent Williams & Works some information. Ms. Anderson reviewed the 2021 master plan and looked for anything that might be outdated or needs changed. Since she is getting to know the township, she is not aware of current ongoing issues or issues that could come up in the future yet that were not issues in 2021.

She will rely on the Planning Commission to supply that information. But reviewing the document on a more regional basis and changes that have emerged since 2021, she has some comments that she has added to the sections.

Chairperson Warner stated that he read the comments and would like her to comment further. Ms. Anderson stated that since some of the Commissioners are new that she would go through and explain the purpose, use, and review process of having a master plan. She explained the master plan vs. zoning ordinance. Ms. Anderson stated the master plan is important because it gives backup to the Commission when someone wants to change the zoning or land use in a way that may not be permitted in the zoning now but should you want to change the zoning or maps in the future it could support it.

The Planning Enabling Act states you should review your master plan every 5 years and asks Planning Commission to take a look and review anything that has changed. For example, demographics, population, renewable energy, short-term rentals, and housing shortages and affordability.

Section 1 the Introduction in the master plan adequately conveys the intent and purpose of the land use and Ms. Anderson feels that it does a good job. Section 2 The summary that includes recommendations at the beginning of the plan she felt was somewhat unusual. It is usually noted that this is something usually found toward the end of the master plan. Chairperson Warner stated it was intended as an executive summary. Section 3 Ms. Anderson questioned if there is some demographic data there that may have changed. She suggested the local history section recognize the local indigenous heritage. Ms. Anderson also stated that the natural features of the Township could be elaborated on further. Page 16, she suggested adding the Township's experience with housing affordability and short-term rentals. Other townships are addressing the issues of short-term rentals which are causing a seasonal economy. Mike Baker stated currently short-term rentals are only allowed in the neighborhood commercial zone. The Township should address this in the future.

Zoning ordinance reflects regulatory issues that are important to the Township. Commissioner Butler questioned the master plan in relation to zoning ordinance. Ms. Anderson stated the master plan sets the policy for preservation of open space, forests and natural land. The master plan sets the tone and guides the policy for land use decisions for what is written in the zoning ordinance.

Page 21, zoning ordinance adopted in 1970's. Seemed somewhat out of place. Commissioner Lundell questioned where better placement would be. Ms. Anderson suggested under Township Services.

In Section 4 Public Participation, the social and economic characteristics could be at the very beginning and called community profile. Could be possibly located in a better area. This is the section that reports out on the public engagement the township did with their residents and asking for their input on issues that were important to them. This section reports on the results of the survey that was sent to township residents. Ms. Anderson suggested taking the resident results and inputting as a chart or graph in the master plan. Also possibly posting the questions. Commissioner Lundell questioned difference between mail survey vs. digital survey with older residents in a township.

Section 5 Goals and Objectives, Ms. Anderson stated the Township may want to review whether initial goals and objectives are still relevant or if it needs revising.

Section 6, Future Land Use, Ms. Anderson suggested reviewing future land use descriptions and acceptable housing. Could include example pictures. There was some discussion about the confusion between the zoning laws and the master plan when it gets into agriculture and agriculture-overlay amongst the residents. Even though the rules are clear to the commission, people seem to have some confusion with it.

Section 7, Implementation, is how to make the master plan come to fruition. You could input some tables in this section. Possibly an implementation table. Possibly imbed maps within the plan.

Section 8, Keeping the Plan Current, Ms. Anderson's conclusion is for the Township to determine whether an update is needed. Supervisor Marcinkowski would like to know what it would cost to update the master plan. Also, whether the grant that was awarded would cover it. At this time, she does not have a specific number. And it would be dependent on a number of factors. The Commissioners discussed the billing procedures to do this. Chairperson Warner asked that Ms. Anderson move ahead with arranging a proposal for the Planning Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Butler, seconded by Commissioner Lundell, to move forward with updating the master plan that would be due in February 2026.

7 AYES

Chairperson Warner requested Ms. Anderson work on a proposal to update the master plan that would be all inclusive and one that would be somewhat limited depending on what the Planning Commission ultimately decides the options they would utilize.

2. Discussion of electric car charging stations with the Planning Consultant. Ms. Anderson also sent out information on this. She outlined some possible options. You could propose a stand-alone land use for fast chargers. She included the three different levels and what would be included and/or needed to use fast charging levels. The fast-charging stations could be used as a stand along use or an accessory use in an existing parking lot. Chairperson Warner discussed the possibility of a charging station for primary use wanting to be located by the freeway in the future.

Chairperson Warner suggested forming a subcommittee and have them get an outline of the direction the Planning Commission wants to go. And then, from there meet with Ms. Anderson to finalize the language. He asked for three volunteers. Commissioners Lundell, Josephson and Butler will be the subcommittee working on the zoning for the electric car charging stations.

3. **Preliminary Site Plan Review** according to **Article XV Site Plan Review**, for applicant, **Dennis Hughes, 5395 Scenic Dr., Whitehall, MI 49461** (in the old pickle barrel building) for a retail establishment according to **Article XI Neighborhood Commercial District, discussing use by right vs. use by special land use.**

Chairperson Warner referred to Mr. Hughes request for preliminary site plan review and feels it should be postponed until August. He feels it is pointless to review it without him here. Multiple commissioners stated they had numerous questions directly for him.

Motion by Commissioner Holman, seconded by Commissioner Campeau to table the preliminary site plan review for 5395 Scenic Dr, Whitehall, MI 49461 until the regular August 2025 meeting.

7 AYES

4. Definition of a basement. Since we will have to have a public hearing for Mr. Hughes for the site plan when we do the final, Chairperson Warner thinks the definition of a basement should be placed on the same public hearing so it could get addressed at the same time.

PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATES

There have been no ZBA meetings since the last meeting. There are currently no applications submitted.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chairperson Warner thanked Ms. Anderson for coming to the meeting and providing all the information and insight on the multiple issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Chris VanOosterhout, 3418 Orshal Road, wants to thank the Planning Commission for taking on the master plan review and feels it is important to the Township. He feels the Commission could investigate using mission and vision statements. Feels there should be more discussion about and where and if there should be further high-density residential zones in the Township.
2. Jeff Marcinkowski, 3744 Jay Rd. The grants the Township applied for have a specific housing designation. The grants are available if the Commission chooses to utilize them.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Holman to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Stewart
Recording Secretary