

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
August 13, 2025

Chair Hollerith called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Hollerith, Forster, Remus, Dohan, Osetek, Green, Thompson

Absent: none

Visitors: Garon Gopigian, Ed Taylor, Lisa Morris

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda as presented or with additions: **Thompson made the motion to approve the agenda. Remus seconded. Seven (7) ayes.**

Public Comment – none

Approval of July 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes: **Remus made the motion to approve the minutes of July 10, 2025, as presented. Thompson seconded. Seven (7) ayes.**

Unfinished Business –

a. **Master Plan Review** –

- i. Open House Recap – Lane provided an update on the Master Plan review, mentioning the two open houses and the feedback received from both. Lane stated the goal now is to have the final draft of the plan ready for review by the Planning Commission at the September meeting. Following that, the plan will then be presented to the Township Board for approval and then a 63-day review followed by a public hearing and then final adoption.
- ii. Review Updated Initial Draft 2025-2026 Master Plan – Hollerith thanked Lane for the updated statistics. Hollerith questioned how many PRE's versus non PRE's are within the Township. Thompson questioned how the values are decided. Hollerith noted that the key-take-aways are good. Osetek questioned the description of the Township's northern boundary, the Odawa Indian Property, the Township 80 and should there be a labor force versus population breakdown in the Master Plan. Thompson asked about pg. 11 and if the numbers behind "Figure" and "Table" will be filled in and could there be more information that may be helpful. Remus had a question about the classification of vacant common area properties with Birchwood. Hollerith asked why PUD's are not shown with one color.
- iii. Review Future Land use map – Lane gave an overview of the 2020 Land use map highlighting areas designated as commercial and industrial noting there is no plan to expand beyond what is currently considered industrial north of Franklin Park. The board discussed the appropriateness of designating certain areas as commercial or

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industrial with suggestions for higher density residential areas. The Otis Hotel property is discussed with Lane explaining its non-conforming use status. The board further discussed the implications of redesignating areas as residential buffer or mixed use.

- iv. Review draft Chapter 8-Implementation – Lane introduced the draft chapter on the Master Plan Implementation strategies emphasizing the importance of having action-able goals. The Board reviewed and discussed various objectives such as encouraging conservation easements and open space development. They reviewed and discussed individual goals and strategies within the first few pages of chapter eight, eliminating items that are not relevant and keeping those that are. The remaining objectives in the chapter will be addressed at the September meeting.

New Business -

- i. none

Other:

- a. Zoning Administrator Report – Lane noted the ZA report is in the packet. Hollerith asked if the Township Board would be revisiting the Pond Hill Farm recently approved PUD in January 2026 regarding increased parking for the Fall Festival in to ensure compliance. Green said that they would be.
- b. Township Board Representative Report – Green updated the board on the Townships withdrawal from the Harbor Springs Airport Authority. The HSAA unanimously voted to allow the Township to leave. Hollerith asked how much the Township paid to be part of the HSAA and how many entities are still supporting it. Dohan questioned if under the Master Plan, should it be noted that West Traverse Township is no longer part of the entity. Green also reported that the Township will begin the process of selecting an architect for a new Township Hall. The first step in the process is to advertise in the local newspaper asking for RFQs (request for qualifications) Once those are received the Township Board will move onto the next step of choosing an architect. The board voted to let a Township resident who was not aware that the keeping of chickens is currently not allowed to keep them.
- c. Correspondence – none

Planning Commissioner Comments (open discussion) – none

Public Comment – Garon Gopigian thanked Green for all his efforts while serving as the Township Rep for the HSAA. He also went on to comment about pg. 1, Conservancy, with regards to the Tunnel of Trees. It is greatly appreciated that the PC is respecting the rural character of it. Gopigian questions if The Otis Hotel wanted to build a restaurant on the property what would be needed. Lane explains that it is not possible under the current zoning and that if they wanted to do that, it would require rezoning.

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Next Meeting: Planning Commission next regular meeting will be held September 10, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: **Remus made the motion to adjourn at 7:02 p.m. Thompson seconded. Seven (7) ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Jim Osetek, Secretary

Transcribed by:
Amy Peters

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