

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
April 8, 2026

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

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

Absent: Dohan, Green

Visitors: Elaine Keiser, Jay Olson, Ed Taylor, Belinda Sobonya, Jim Roznowski, Lisa Morris, Garon Gopigian

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda as presented or with additions: Osetek motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Thompson seconded. Five (5) ayes, two (2) absent.

Public Comment – none

Minutes: **Thompson made the motion to approve the minutes of March 11, 2026, as presented. Hollerith seconded. Five (5) ayes, two (2) absent.**

Unfinished Business – none

New Business:

- a. **Case #03-2026** – consider a request for site plan review as submitted by Elaine Keiser, Architect, Inc., on behalf of West Traverse Township, to all for the parcel at 5686 Lake Rd to be used as government offices (Township Hall). The property is particularly described in tax parcel #24-16-15-10-300-016. Lane provided additional comments before the overview of the case. Lane stated that the property located at 5686 Lake Rd is zoned S1-Public and the use of the property as a Township Hall is permitted by right along with the focus of the site plan review is on how the building is sited on the property, not on the cost, financing, or internal layout. Lane also noted that the Planning Commission's authority is limited to the site plan review, does not extend to off-site improvements, that the Township owns adjacent property which is separate from the subject property and that the standards listed in the analysis memo should be applied to the project on the subject property. Lane commented on the correspondence received from Lisa Morris, Kristi Hollingsworth, and Jay Olson. Lane began his overview of the project detailing the proposed buildings dimension, sq. footage (4100), that the two-acre requirement is consistent with the Master Plan as are the parking standards, number of parking spaces, 47, and landscaping requirements. He pointed out the proposed driveway access has been confirmed to be safe by the Emmet County Road Commission and that the site plan includes provisions for emergency vehicle access, snow storage areas and that the proposed lighting is down shielded to comply with the Zoning Ordinances. Lane discussed Sections 311.2 which provides S-1 District

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Requirements, 309.5 which pertains to Parking, 408.2 which pertains to Exterior Lighting, and 504.1 which provides Graphic Requirements for site plans, noting that they are all satisfied and informed the Planning Commission that sample motions for approval, denial or postponement are available in their packets. **Forster asked for Commissioners comments.** Remus questioned the height of the light poles and are they Dark Sky compliant. Architect Keiser thanked the Planning Commission for their questions and distributed a detailed diagram of the light poles showing height, dimensions and etc. Keiser touched on the ingress/egress noting it has adequate space, specifically pointed out the line of sight from the entrance to the front door, noted that the lights will be Dark Sky compliant and will be down shielded. She discussed the parking areas, front and rear, described the traffic flow within the parking lot, pointed out landscaping and the additional screening that will be provided for the utilities in the NW corner, the location of the septic field, how she and the Project Centennial Committee's goal is to preserve the history and pay tribute to the heritage of the current Township Hall. Remus asked about the direction of drainage and the height of the retention walls. Osetek questioned how much of the day will the lights be on, will the lights be timed, motion sensor or on a timer, stated concern about the height of the poles and the potential for the light to escape the property. Lane commented that the Planning Commission does not have the authority to regulate lighting or noise levels beyond the zoning standards. Keiser addressed the noise concerns noting that the systems will be designed to minimize noise. Thompson likes that it is Dark Sky compliant and noted there are quite a few ways to program the parking lot lights. Hollerith asked about the sewer system, and if the new building would run over/sit on the sewer lines. Olson pointed out the sewer system lines and how they run under the road, up the two track to the back of the property and that the new building will not sit on or near the lines. Hollerith also asked about the two-acre minimum and landscaping around the parking lot light islands. Remus questioned if the planting of any new trees were proposed. Keiser informed the Board that she has consulted with Vanessa Warren regarding the landscaping. **Forster asked if there were any public comments.** Lisa Morris complimented Keiser's plans and stated she has concerns about the removal of trees. Morris informed the board members that the organization "49740.org" did have interest in the current Township Hall but at this time cannot make a commitment due to their organization not able to fund raise. Morris noted concerns about conflicts with parking in the future stating that if there were different meetings going on simultaneously at the Township, people would park along Lake Rd, that the Township should not be short-sighted about the location of the new building and that other locations should have been considered. Morris also addressed the noise that could come from the utilities, the difficulty with screening to lower the noise level, how annoying it would be to her and to please add taller and denser trees in the landscaping plans. Lane replied to Morris' concerns about parking and lighting stating that the parking lot size & occupancy falls under building occupancy, and the Board cannot hypothesize possible future parking conditions. Forster asked if there were any more Commissioner questions.

Hollerith stated that the conditions need to meet the State and County requirements, permits etc. Thompson asked if the building could be rented out in the future. **Forster asked for a motion for approval, denial, or postponement. Remus made the following motion.** *‘I move to approve Case #03-2026, a site plan review to provide for the construction of a new Township Hall at 5686 Lake Rd, tax parcel #24-16-15-10-300-016, as described and depicted in the application materials submitted by Elaine Keiser, Architect Inc., dated March 25, 2026, the site plan dated March 25, 2026 and the floor plan and elevation drawings dated March 25, 2026, because the applicable standards of the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance have been satisfied, subject to the following conditions: all required permits and approvals from all applicable regulatory agencies, including District Health Department #3, the Emmet County Road Commission, and the Emmet County Building Department, shall be obtained and kept current by the applicant and a copy shall be provided to the Township and kept on file with the West Traverse Township Clerk.’* **Seconded by Thompson.** All aye.

Other:

- a. Zoning Administrator Report – in packet. Lane noted that Ann’s Nest requested to be on the May PC agenda as they were not ready yet for April. The Polo Field will be on the May agenda as well. Lane informed the Board of letters received regarding Ann’s Nest. Lane clarified that Emmet County and Beckett & Raeder are not pursuing any Data Centers and disregard the rumors.
- b. Township Board Representative – Green absent. Lane gave overview of the recent Township Board meeting where the Otis SUP was approved with conditions as well as approving the Master Plan with a few minor corrections. Once the Master Plan is finished it will be on the website and copies will be available
- c. Correspondence – Lane referenced the letters received to the Board regarding Ann’s Nest from Jim & Beverly Osetek, Belinda Sobonya and Jim Roznowski.

Planning Commissioner Comments (open discussion) – Hollerith questioned the status of the 4850 Lake Rd home. Lane noted the owner had passed away, doesn’t know the status of the property but if there are new owners he will work with them on cleaning it up. Hollerith inquired about home at 7655 Lauers Lane and questioned is that a business or home occupation. Lane said it is something he’s watching.

Public Comments – none

Next Meeting: Planning Commission next regular meeting will be held May 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: Forster asked for a motion to adjourn. **Hollerith made the motion to adjourn at 6:20 p.m. Thompson seconded. Five (5) ayes, two (2) absent.**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Jim Osetek, Secretary
Transcribed by:
Amy Peters

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Approved: 5-13-26