

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
July 8, 2026

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

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

Absent: Osetek

Visitors: Lisa Morris, Garon Gopigian

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda as presented or with additions: Dohan motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Remus seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent.

Public Comment – none

Minutes: **Thompson made the motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2026, as presented. Remus seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent.**

Unfinished Business: none

New Business:

- a. **Case # 04-2026** – Chair Forster opened the Public Hearing at 5:32 p.m. to consider a draft amendment to the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance as follows: amend Section 403.5 to ensure compliance with Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance. Lane explained the need for the amendment to ensure the compliance with Article 8 of the ZO and Section 604 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act noting a previous case where the ZBA denied a Lot area variance due to the applicant not meeting the criteria. Lane informed the Board that a Public Hearing was required and a notice was published on June 17, 2026, and no written comments were received. Dohan suggested adding “except as otherwise determined” to the amendment. Public Comment: Garon Gopigian asked for “layman’s” clarification regarding amending the ZO and questioned what would happen in a “landlocked” scenario. Lisa Morris expressed concerns about the amendment potentially increasing density and questioned if it would help in “pro” density situations. Forster closed the Public Hearing at 5:43 p.m. and asked for Commissioner comments to which there was none. **Dohan made the following motion. “Following a Public Hearing held on July 8, 2026, I, John Dohan, move to recommend approval to the Township Board of Trustees an Ordinance to amend Section 403.5 of the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance to ensure compliance with Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance and Section 604 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006, as amended MCL 125.3604 with amended language as discussed by the PC”. Thompson seconded. Roll call vote: Green – yes,**

Proposed: 7-8-26

Approved: 8-12-26

Thompson – yes, Remus – yes, Forster – yes, Dohan – yes, Hollerith – yes. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent.

- b. **Discussion – Data Centers & Battery Storage Facilities** – Lane introduced the topic of Data Centers and Battery Storage Facilities noting their increasing popularity, the need for regulation, the pros/cons including the potential impact on the community and the need for pro-active regulation. Lane pointed out that other communities are also discussing the data centers/battery storage facilities, that some are adopting moratoriums to allow time for research & regulations and suggested that West Traverse Township consider adopting a moratorium as well. Lane outlined the process for adopting a moratorium including public hearings and approval by the County and Township Board. Forster questioned that once a moratorium is approved, is there a specific time period to follow and could the moratorium be replaced with adopting an ordinance. Thompson stated that the Township should be proactive and informed regarding the regulation of these facilities and keep the best interest of the Township first and foremost. Thompson pointed out that there is a difference between Data Centers and Battery Storage Centers, the specific regulations for each, the importance of aligning with other communities on the regulations and offered to provide additional information about Data Centers and Battery Storage Units to the Board. Lane pointed out information in the Commissioners packets regarding an upcoming training session on Data Centers hosted by the Michigan Township Association. Green suggested putting a moratorium in place as soon as possible. Hollerith asked Lane what the County and the other Townships feelings and concerns were regarding the issues of Data Centers and Battery Storage Units. Forster questioned if a motion was necessary to begin the process in writing a moratorium. Lane said he would write one up and send it to the Township Attorney to review. Dohan suggested the Township be ready and educated should a case present itself. Thompson agreed that everyone should educate themselves on the centers and ask questions. Green stated that the Township stay aligned with the County regarding the Data Centers & Battery Storage Units.

Other:

- a. Zoning Administrator Report – in packet along with a copy of the Polo Field schedule.
- b. Township Board Representative – Green updated the Board regarding the signing of the contract for the new Township Hall with Harborview Contractors, when they hope to break ground and the amount of bids sent out to different banks.
- c. Correspondence – none

Planning Commissioner Comments (open discussion) – Hollerith questioned the Blight status for the house on 4850 Lake Rd, mentioned the approval of the tent at Pond Hill Farms, if there is a need for an updated site plan for it, he noted the Tee Pee set up at the Otis, asked about the progress regarding Ann's Nest and questioned the second phase of storage units on State St. Dohan mentioned seeing the Otis SUP Appeal on the Circuit Court website. Hollerith asked about the appeal process for the Otis case.

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Public Comments – Garon Gopigian thanked Lane for his diligence and that a getting a moratorium in place is a good idea. Lisa Morris stated concerns about communities relying on Data Centers for potential revenue, questioned if a proposed Battery Storage Ordinance would regulate individual homes with solar panels with battery storage and also questioned if a proposed ordinance would address both commercial buildings and residential homes.

Next Meeting: Planning Commission next regular meeting will be held August 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: Forster asked for a motion to adjourn. **Thompson made a motion to adjourn. Dohan seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent.**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Jim Osetek, Secretary

Transcribed by:
Amy Peters

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