HELENA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 5, 2026 • 7:00 PM | 8751 Helena Road, Alden, MI 49612

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1. Call to Order: Chair D. Hunstad called the regular meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance: Those present participated.

3. Roll Call: Commission members participated in the meeting. All were in attendance

4. Approval of Agenda: Motion: F. Vandenberg; Second: J. Schilling. The November 5, 2026 agenda was approved by voice vote; no opposition was heard.

5. Conflicts of Interest: None declared.

6. Approval of October 1, 2026 Minutes: Motion made to approve the October 1, 2026 draft minutes; Motion made by J. Gurr , Second: J. Schilling. Approved by voice vote; no opposition was heard.

7. Communications: The Commission acknowledged correspondence from Laura Wilcox concerning the October meeting and discussed the use of the term “jet ski” in watercraft provisions. No action was taken.

8. Public Comment: Laura Wilcox commented on inconsistent Planning Commission meeting schedules shown on the Township website and requested clarification of the bylaws and monthly meeting schedule.

9. Zoning Administrator Report: Zoning Administrator Jackie Petersen referred to her written report and described an ongoing zoning-enforcement matter involving a privately installed streetlight. No formal action was taken.

10. Old Business:

A. Planning Commission Bylaws: The Commission reviewed proposed revisions addressing meeting frequency, membership terms and conflicts of interest. A date correction from November 4 to November 5 was identified for the draft. Motion: J. Gurr; Second: R. Wanstreet, to approve the revised bylaws and forward them to the Township Board for approval. Approved unanimously by voice vote; no opposition or abstentions were reported.

B. Zoning Definitions: Review of ordinance definitions remains in progress. Additional research from the Zoning Administrator was requested.

C. Data Centers / Four-Township Ad Hoc: The Commission discussed mulit-township data-center planning, the Four Township ad hoc meeting, possible zoning approaches, and obtaining legal guidance before selecting an ordinance approach. Motion: J. Schilling; Second: D. Whipple, to contact Township legal counsel to determine availability and obtain preliminary information and potential cost guidance concerning data-center zoning, or a referral to qualified counsel. Approved by voice vote. No expenditure amount was authorized in the motion.

D. Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZOA 2026-01 — Section 5.02.02: The Commission reviewed the October 15, 2026 Version 1 draft concerning waterfront restrictions and related Chapter 1 definitions. The

Commission discussed maintaining definitions in Section 1.03 and corrected “prevent” to “prevents” in the Shoreline Greenbelt Protection Buffer definition. Motion: J. Gurr; Second: R. Byron, to advance the revised Section 5.02.02 amendment through the ordinance review process with the stated correction. Approved by voice vote; no opposition was heard. A public hearing was discussed for January 7, 2027; no ordinance was adopted at this meeting.

11. New Business:

A. Michigan Townships Association Funding: The Chair summarized publicly reported MTA revenue sources in response to an earlier public comment. No action was taken.

B. Four Township Collaborative Ad Hoc Meeting: Addressed during the data-center discussion under Old Business.

C. Planning Commission Terms: The Commission discussed three-year appointments, existing staggered terms and inconsistent historical appointment records. No changes to individual appointments or terms were formally approved. Further review was left open.

12. Public Comment: A Ball Park project update was requested. Supervisor C.C. Peeples reported that shoreline stabilization and seeding work had been completed, and beach work was expected to continue in the spring. Additional comments concerned historical Planning Commission appointments and terms.

13. Next Meeting: Thursday, December 3, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

14. Adjournment: The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:12 p.m. No formal adjournment motion was discernible in the transcript.

Prepared & submitted by:

Oryana Leffew, Township Clerk / Recording Secretary