

ISABELLA COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

January 8, 2026

A regular meeting of the Isabella County Planning Commission was held on January 8, 2026, at the Isabella County Commission on Aging Building, 2200 S. Lincoln Rd., Mt. Pleasant, Michigan immediately following the organizational meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kelly Bean, Kyle Camp, Adam Brookens, Lisa Hoisington, Steve Swaney, Ann Silker

MEMBERS ABSENT: Phillip Vogel, Russ Hyde, Tim O'Neil

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Ray Johnson, Planner/GIS Analyst
Mackenzie Perkins, Administrative Assistant, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bean at 6:09 p.m. at the conclusion of the organizational meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the members.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mr. Swaney supported by Mrs. Silker to approve the agenda.

Yes: Kelly Bean, Phillip Vogel, Kyle Camp, Adam Brookens, Lisa Hoisington, Steve Swaney, Ann Silker

No: None

Motion to Approve carried.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the October 8, 2025 meeting were circulated to the members prior to the meeting for their review.

A motion was made by Mrs. Silker, supported by Mr. Swaney, to approve the minutes from October 8, 2025.

Yes: Kelly Bean, Phillip Vogel, Kyle Camp, Adam Brookens, Lisa Hoisington, Steve Swaney, Ann Silker

No: None

Motion to Approve carried.

LIAISON REPORTS

Zoning Board of Appeals – None

Parks & Recreation – Mrs. Silker stated that the last few meetings were canceled due to the weather. She also stated that a Parks Board meeting is scheduled for February.

Board of Commissioners – Mr. Swaney stated that the Board held their organizational meeting and appointed Frank Engler as the Chair and Tobin Hope as the Vice Chair. He also stated that there were small changes to the bylaws and that he was appointed to the Planning Commission by the Board for 2026.

TOWNSHIP CONCERNS

Denver Township – Mrs. Jackie Curtis stated that Denver Township will be celebrating their 150-year anniversary. She stated that they are planning the celebration for the fall.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Opened at 6:12 p.m.

Closed at 6:12 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS –

Special Use Permit #25-01 – Bruce Green – Private Campground – Gilmore Township

Mr. Johnson stated that the special use application is to operate an Outdoor Recreation Facility (3-site Private Campground). Mr. Johnson explained that the Township Assessor reached out to staff about a building that was placed on the property without first obtaining permits. He stated that staff reached out to Mr. Green and after discussions determined it was a park model RV. Mr. Johnson discussed a temporary permit for the RV and Mr. Green complied with the ordinance by issuance of a temporary zoning permit but expressed his desire to recreate year-round.

Mr. Johnsons stated that this type of request is not unusual and has been approved in the past for similar situations. He also informed the board that the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) indicated in an email that Mr. Green will not need a permit as the number of campsites is less than five (5).

Screening was discussed by staff to protect the adjacent single-family dwelling from the north from the quasi-commercial operation that would take place if an approval was made. He indicated that the applicant had no issues installing the recommended screening.

Mr. Johnson informed the Board that if the application were to be approved that the staff recommends the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall maintain all existing screening between campsites and neighboring properties.
2. The applicant shall install and maintain screening on the north property line from the east end of the RV continuing west to the existing trees. Screening shall be in the form of a double row of staggered evergreen trees placed no greater than 10-feet on center at a minimal, height of 3 feet to grade.
3. The special use is approved to operate 24 hours a day.

Mr. Camp asked if sites 2 and 3 had to be only in the specified locations. He also asked if there were any setback requirements for the sites.

Mr. Johnson stated that this was the location that the applicant chose for the location of these two additional sites and setbacks were for outdoor activities only.

Mr. Brookens asked if the neighbors want the recommended screening.

Mr. Johnson stated that there has been no contact from neighbors regarding the request.

Mr. Bean asked if the applicant wanted to speak. The applicant declined to offer any comment.

Public Hearing opened 6:16 p.m.

Public Comment closed at 6:16 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Camp to approve Special Use Permit Number 25-01 (SUP#25-01) as submitted by Bruce Green to establish and Outdoor Recreational Facility (3-site private campground) in the Agricultural Buff (AG-3) District. The approval shall be condition upon the following:

1. The applicant shall maintain all existing screening between campsites and neighboring properties.
2. The applicant shall install and maintain screening on the north property line from the east end of the RV continuing west to the existing trees. Screening shall be in the form of a double row of staggered evergreen trees placed no greater than 10-feet on center at a minimal, height of 3 feet to grade.

3. The special use is approved to operate 24 hours a day.

Mr. Bean stated that he does not see the need for screening. He stated that he drove by the property and could not tell that it was to be a campground.

Mr. Johnson explained that it is a suggestion by the staff and not a requirement, however the planning commission has historically screened these types of uses from single family dwellings.

Mr. Camp asked if there were any limitations to what can be done on the parcel. He asked what is to stop someone from putting something outrageous on the property.

Mr. Johnson discussed the enforcement process.

The Board discussed the necessity for screening.

An amended motion was made by Mr. Camp to approve Special Use Permit Number 25-01 (SUP#25-01) as submitted by Bruce Green to establish and Outdoor Recreational Facility (3-site private campground) in the Agricultural Buff (AG-3) District. The approval shall be condition upon the following:

- I. The special use is approved to operate 24 hours a day.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Swaney.

Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Bean called for a vote.

Yes: Kelly Bean, Phillip Vogel, Kyle Camp, Adam Brookens, Lisa Hoisington, Steve Swaney, Ann Silker

No: None

Motion Carried.

Special Use Permit #25-03 – Craig and Karen Russon – Bed and Breakfast – Vernon Township

Mr. Johnson reviewed his staff report indicating that Karen and Craig Russon are requesting a Special Use Permit to operate 3-guest room Bed and Breakfast. Mr. Johnson stated that the staff reached out the Central Michigan Health Department to determine if any permits or inspections were required for a Bed and Breakfast. He stated that Elly Saxton, Environmental Health Supervisor, indicated that a well and septic review is not required, nor are any inspections or permits required since the Bed and Breakfast would have less than 10 guest rooms.

Mr. Johnson stated that the applicants are requesting that the establishment be a 24-hour operation.

Mr. Bean asked if the applicant would like to speak.

Karen Russon gave an overview of the property history. Mrs. Russon explained that her and Mr. Russon are also desiring to incorporate teaching about their permaculture farm to guests.

Public comment opened at 6:30 p.m.

Jeffrey Charnley gave a brief history of the Stevenson Lake area and stated that he came on behalf of 10 other neighbors in support of Russon's Bed and Breakfast.

Hearing no further comments, Mr. Bean closed public comment at 6:46 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Camp to approve Special Use Permit Number 25-03 (SUP#25-03) as submitted by Craig and Karen Russon to establish a 3-room Bed and Breakfast Establishment in the General Agricultural (AG-2) district. The approval shall be conditioned upon the following:

- I. The special use is approved to operate 24 hours a day.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Swaney.

Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Bean called for a vote.

Yes: Kelly Bean, Phillip Vogel, Kyle Camp, Adam Brookens, Lisa Hoisington, Steve Swaney, Ann Silker

No: None

Motion Carried

OTHER BUSINESS (NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS)

Site Plan Review #25-11 – Schafour Builders – Private Rad – Rolland Township

Mr. Johnson reported that Chris Schafer submitted a site plan review application on behalf of Wayne Yoder to establish a private road to serve less than 4 lots. He stated that the application included a detailed survey and site plan showing the layout of the proposed private road.

Mr. Johnson stated that the staff recommend the following conditions if approval is going to be made. He stated the conditions are necessary for the applicant to comply with the zoning ordinance.

1. The applicant/owner shall provide a signed affidavit certifying that the private road has been constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance.
2. The applicant/owner shall adhere to the Uniform House Numbering Ordinance for a private road name, install a stop sign, road name sign, private road sign, and provide a copy of a recorded road maintenance agreement in accordance with the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Brookens asked which parcels the private road was going to be located on.

Mr. Johnson stated that it will connect to Guy Rd. Mr. Johnson showed where it was located on the survey submitted.

Mr. Brookens asked if there were any natural gas setback requirements.

Mr. Johnson stated that it is up to the gas company to determine the requirements.

Mr. Camp asked what a recorded maintenance agreement is.

Mr. Johnson stated that it is required by the zoning ordinance to provide for maintenance activities in a document recorded with property deeds. He indicated the zoning ordinance clearly outlines the requirements for the document.

Mr. Brookens asked how anyone would know if the road was taken care of.

Mr. Johnson stated that violations are complaint-based.

Mrs. Silker asked if the right of way width of 44ft is universal for private roads.

Mr. Johnson stated the width is dependent on the number of lots to be served by the private road.

A motion was made by Mr. Swaney to approve Site Plan Review 25-11 (SPR#25-11) as submitted by Chris Schafer on behalf of Wayne Yoder to establish a private road serving less than 4 lots in the Buffer Agricultural (AG-3) District. The approval shall be conditioned upon the following:

1. The applicant/owner shall provide a signed affidavit certifying that the private road has been constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance.
2. The applicant/owner shall adhere to the Uniform House Numbering Ordinance for a private road name, install a stop sign, road name sign, private road sign, and provide a

copy of a recorded road maintenance agreement in accordance with the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Brookens.

Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Bean called for a vote

Yes: Kelly Bean, Phillip Vogel, Kyle Camp, Adam Brookens, Lisa Hoisington, Steve Swaney, Ann Silker

No: None

Motion Carried

Union Township Text Amendment

Mr. Johnson indicated to the members that a text amendment was received from Union Township in November. He indicated that staff did not have concerns with the amendment. Mr. Johnson stated that staff will send a letter to Union Township informing them of the Planning Commission's review and any comments the members may have on the amendments.

The members had no comments.

City of St. Louis, Gratiot County – Master Plan Public Hearing Notice

Mr. Johnson indicated to the members that a notice of public hearing was received from the City of St. Louis in Gratiot County. Mr. Johnson stated that it was for the public to express their views on Gratiot County Master Plan to be adopted for the City of St. Louis. Mr. Johnson stated that staff will send a letter to the City of St. Louis informing them of the review and any comments the members have.

The members had no comments.

2024 Planning Commission Annual Report

Mr. Johnson reviewed the 2024 Annual Report for the members. A typographical error was noticed, Mr. Johnson indicated he would administratively correct the error.

Mr. Camp asked what the majority of zoning complaints received were regarding.

Mr. Johnson stated they are Accumulation of Waste and Unlicensed/Inoperable Vehicles.

Hearing no other comments or concerns, he stated staff would forward the report to the Board of Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Opened at 7:05 p.m.

Closed at 7:05 p.m.

STAFF COMMENTS – None

PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Camp asked about Mr. Nieporte.

Mr. Johnson indicated he was unavailable for this meeting.

The Board discussed single wide trailers and 2nd residences on parcels.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bean adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Ann Silker, Secretary
Mackenzie Perkins, Recording Secretary