

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 13, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Chairperson Sager called the meeting of the Ross Township Planning Commission to order at 6:00 PM at the Ross Township Hall. All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Pamela Sager
Michael Bekes
Mark Markillie
Michael Moore
Steve Maslen
Sherri Snyder

Absent: Jeff Price

Also Present: Nick Keck, AGS – Township Zoning Administrator
Josh Thall – Township Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bekes motioned to approve the agenda as written, and Moore supported. The motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

The Commission proceeded with consideration of the March 23, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Snyder motioned to approve the minutes as written and Maslen supported. The motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Sager stated the first item to come before the Planning Commission (PC) is an application submitted by Cheff Center, located in Ross Township at 8450 North 43rd Street, Augusta MI Michigan requesting PC review and approval of an Amended Site Plan under Section 21.4 and Section 21.6 of the Ross Township Zoning Ordinance (ZO) for an addition to an existing barn for a new indoor riding arena. The property is in the Rural Residential District (R-R) with Parcel No.: 3904-15-385-010.

Keck provided an overview of the application, confirming the proposal is for a new riding stable that will be attached to the existing building. Thall explained that because the property already has special land

use approval for horse boarding or a riding stable, standard notice and a review of Section 19 of the Zoning Ordinance are not required before the Planning Commission decides on the application.

Riley Boomershine was present on behalf of the applicant and confirmed the details of the application, also noting there will be a small entrance between the old and new building, the distance between the building will support fire separation, and water runoff will be handled by a gutter system discharging into a basin for collection.

The PC found the plans detailed and confirmed that the land's slope will not pose water runoff issues.

Chair Sager noted no written correspondence was received by the Township and asked Boomershine if he received anything that should be entered into the record as the site plan indicates written permission should be obtained from adjacent property owners. He then offered a copy of an email citing no concerns regarding the proposed construction from Linda Moore, Secretary of immediate neighbor Battle Creek Hunt, which the PC entered into record.

The PC reviewed Section 21.4 specifically focusing on the attributes that Keck reported were either not met or needed PC review to determine the adequacy of the plans. The PC agreed to the following:

- Waiver of showing all lot lines of the large parcel as Keck shared all setback requirements are met.
- Waiver of needing to show the location and height of all existing and proposed structures within 100 feet of the proposed construction.
- Waiver of the need to provide topographical elevations at two-foot intervals, which included a discussion of a potential ZO change to change the requirement to four-foot intervals as that is the standard on these types of maps. The PC agreed to handle this at some time in the near future.
- Waiver of elevation and floor plans of all buildings on the property as this construction will be at grade level as are all existing buildings.
- Waiver of the need to present soil characteristics as the construction will be in the same area as the existing barn.
- Waiver of a need to present a drainage management plan with design calculations showing drainage courses as rainwater will be collected in gutters and discharged into a collection basin.

The PC proceeded to review Section 21.6 (Approval)

Criteria for Site Plan Review. The site plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Township Planning Commission upon finding that:

- 1. The proposed use will not have a harmful effect on the surrounding neighborhood development. The provision for fencing, walls, and/or landscaping may be required as a screening device to minimize adverse effects upon surrounding development.**

The PC agreed that no issue is present as screening is not necessary due to the location of the new barn to neighbors and the road.

- 2. There is a proper relationship between the major thoroughfares and proposed service drives, driveways and parking areas so as to insure the safety and convenience of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.**

The PC agreed that no issue is present as there will be no changes to the existing roadway or driveway other than the existing ingress/egress driveway will be attached to the area of additional parking.

- 3. The adverse effects resulting from the locations of buildings and accessory structures will be minimized to the occupants of adjacent properties.**

The PC agreed that no issue is present as the only neighbor (Battle Creek Hunt) has no concerns with the construction of the new indoor arena.

- 4. The proper development of roads, easements and utilities has been provided to protect the general health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Township.**

The PC agreed that no issue is present as the general health, safety and welfare of the Township's citizens are protected.

- 5. The natural features of the landscape, such as ponds, streams, hills, wooded areas, etc. shall be retained where they afford a barrier or buffer between adjoining properties being put to different use.**

The PC agreed that no issue present as the new building's location will be on the opposite side of the existing barn where the water runoff may impact Stoney Lake and all other natural features of the landscape will be retained as the new barn will be constructed at natural grade.

- 6. That as many features of the landscape shall be retained as possible where they furnish a barrier or buffer between the project and adjoining properties used for dissimilar purposes and where they assist in preserving the general appearance of the neighborhood or help control erosion or the discharge of storm waters. Judicious effort shall be demonstrated to preserve the integrity of the land, existing topography, natural features (i.e., slopes, woodlands, etc.) and natural drainage patterns to the greatest extent feasible.**

The PC agreed that no issue is present as the existing building will be a barrier to water runoff to Stoney Lake and the gutter system discharging to a collection basin is adequate control.

- 7. That the plan will not result in any additional run off of surface waters onto adjoining property.**

The PC agreed that no issue is present as the topography of land will not change and additional surface waters from the roof will be properly handled.

Moore moved to grant Site Plan approval for the proposed addition to the Cheff Center barn for a new indoor riding arena at 8450 North 43rd Street, Augusta MI with no conditions. The approval is based on the review of Zoning Ordinance Section 21.4 (Site Plan), Section 21.6 (Approval), the applicant's documentation and the statements made at this PC meeting. Snyder supported and the motion passed unanimously with a 6-0 vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairperson Sager stated there was no unfinished business to conduct at this meeting.

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Bekes reported there has not been a Ross Township Board meeting since the last PC meeting.

REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Bekes reported the ZBA met on April 1, 2026 with one review requiring a completed survey on one property line prior to the applicant moving forward with construction of a deck and another review resulting in a tabled decision on a lot coverage variance request in order to give the applicant and builder an opportunity to explore a ZBA proposed lesser relaxation to total lot coverage than what was requested by the applicant.

MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, ADVISORS

Chair Sager shared the upcoming April 27th PC meeting will involve two public hearings on ZO changes and one issue to decide.

Markillie shared the result of his study of the prior R-3 to R-1 setback discussion and cited Oshtemo's ZO, Section 50.70 -Supplemental Set Back Provision as a potential reference for PC review. Markillie committed to making a comparison between Oshtemo's ZO and Ross Township's ZO in this regard (buffering criteria between R-3 and R-1 Districts) and present it to the PC for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Sager motioned to adjourn the meeting and Bekes supported it. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Bekes
Board Liaison to the Planning Commission
Acting Recording Secretary