

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 22, 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
 Tom Saad

Absent: None

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

Chair Sager welcomed new Planning Commission member Tom Saad. Saad gave a brief overview of his history and desire to serve the Township.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

The Commission proceeded with consideration of the May 18, 2026, Planning Commission (PC) meeting minutes. Snyder motioned to approve the minutes as written and Moore supported. The motion carried with a 6-0 vote in favor with Saad abstaining as he was not present at the respective meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Non-Public Hearing Agenda Items Only

Jack Gesmundo briefly reviewed his history of Township projects and presented an AI-generated Watercraft Mooring Regulation Ordinance for consideration. Gesmundo stated he plans to share the ordinance with the Ross Township Board at their upcoming meeting and request approval to add mooring regulation to the Ross Township Zoning Ordinance (ZO).

Ryan Vosburg asked the Planning Commission to re-evaluate the ZO provisions for ground-mounted solar panels, stating that his roof is too small to accommodate the panels needed to meet his power needs.

Planning Commission members noted that the Ross Township Board had previously directed the Commission to remove those provisions from the ZO and suggested Vosburg attend the July 21 Board meeting to request reconsideration of their position. Bekes agreed to notify the Board in advance.

NEW BUSINESS

The first item to come before the Planning Commission is a Public Hearing to review an ordinance to allow authority and temporary moratorium on acceptance and review of data center applications.

Thall explained two key areas of the proposed ZO text amendments, including the addition of Section 24.8 to give the ability to add temporary moratoriums in the future if beneficial to the Township and to implement a moratorium on data centers for a period of one year, with ability for the Ross Township Board to extend the period if necessary.

Chair Sager opened and closed public comment after no members of the public were present to speak.

Bekes moved to recommend the **ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT on TEMPORARY MORATORIUM AUTHORITY AND TEMPORARY MORATORIUM FOR DATA CENTER**, as presented, to the Ross Township Board for consideration and approval. Saad supported the motion, which passed unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

Thall agreed to send the materials to Supervisor Hutchings and request that the topic be placed on the July 21 Board meeting agenda.

The next item to come before the Planning Commission is a Public Hearing to change Zoning Ordinance (ZO) Section 21.4.N topographic elevations required in site plan application criteria.

Chair Sager asked if there were any concerns by PC members of the change. With no concerns coming forward, Chair Sager opened and closed public comment after no members of the public were present to speak.

Moore motioned to recommend change to Section 21.4.N specifically the topographical requirements which are currently listed at two-foot intervals to four feet to be more in line with industry standards to the Ross Township Board for consideration and approval. Bekes supported the motion, which passed unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

The next item to come before the Planning Commission is a Public Hearing to clarify ZO Section 23.8.A, Variance Standard Criteria.

Thall explained the proposed ZO text amendments.

Chair Sager opened and closed public comment after no members of the public were present to speak.

Following discussion about the clarity and completeness of the proposed text amendments, the Planning Commission agreed to table the decision on whether to forward the materials to the Ross Township

Board for consideration. Thall agreed to incorporate the discussion points into revised variance standard criteria and provide them to the Planning Commission members before the next meeting. Bekes received approval to share the revised materials with the ZBA for additional feedback, which will also be reported back to the Planning Commission for consideration prior to the next PC Meeting.

The next item to come before the Planning Commission is addressing an error in ZO Section 21.6.B.1 changing “affect” to “effect”.

Thall explained that correcting typographical errors without a public hearing is standard practice and stated he would make the change in the next ZO update.

The next item to come before the Planning Commission is discussion regarding ZO Section 17.1.A.8 to address language regarding the parking or storage of vehicles, motorhomes and the like in the front yard of waterfront lots together with review of Section 18.1.C.3 to address the same on vacant waterfront lots.

Keck explained the potential conflicts, specifically stating the potential issue that the front yard of waterfront homes is the area between the home and the water. After discussion, the Planning Commission agreed that Thall would consult Bert Gale of AGS regarding whether the existing ZO language is sufficient to address the issues as there are existing definitions which could resolve concerns. If Gale determines that text amendments would strengthen the ZO in this regard, Keck will prepare draft text amendments for the PC’s consideration at its next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

The first item to come before the Planning Commission was continued discussion on setback provisions between Zoning classifications.

Markillie distributed materials comparing setback and buffering provisions between zoning districts in the Ross Township, Oshtemo Township, and Texas Township Zoning Ordinances. After further discussion, the Planning Commission agreed that Markillie would review previously approved Ross Township site plans to identify actual setbacks and request Gale to explain how AGS applies current ZO standards when a property line separates two zoning districts.

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Bekes reported that, at its May 19 meeting, the Ross Township Board unanimously approved an ordinance imposing a temporary moratorium on data centers and appointed Ella Philander to the ZBA and Tom Saad to the Planning Commission, bringing both bodies to full membership. At its June 16 meeting, the Board approved changing the Township’s credit card vendor, transitioning payroll services to ADP, increasing road patrolling utilizing part time Police Officers from other areas, and approved an updated new fire truck agreement.

REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Bekes reported that the ZBA met on June 3, 2026, and conditionally approved a variance for total lot coverage for a new home at 307 South Gull Lake Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Any Topic

Chair Sager opened and closed public comment after no members of the public were present to speak.

MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, ADVISORS

No input was given.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Sager motioned to adjourn the meeting and Saad supported it. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

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