

Lodi Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

3775 Pleasant Lake Road Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

October 28, 2025 at 7 pm

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Chair Strader at 7:00 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

2. Roll Call

Present: Froberg, Marsh, Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Sweetland, Vestergaard

Absent: None

Others Present: Recording Secretary Michelle Joppeck,
Township Planner Hannah Smith,
Township Attorney Jesse O'Jack,
and several other members of the public

3. Approval of Agenda

Stevenson moved to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Sweetland. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

4. Public Hearing: None

5. Public Comment

Public comment began at 7:02 pm. No comments were received from the public. Public comment ended at 7:02 pm.

6. Approval of Minutes – 9/23/2025, 10/16/2025 & 10/20/2025

Sweetland noted that the reference to the PDA in the last paragraph of Old Business b. Solar Ordinance Update should be corrected to PDR.

Sweetland moved to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2025 Lodi Township Planning Commission regular meeting as amended. Second by Rogers. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

Stevenson moved to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2025 Lodi Township Planning Commission meeting as presented. Second by Marsh. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

Sweetland moved to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2025 Lodi Township Planning Commission meeting as presented. Second by Marsh. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

7. Old Business:

a. Lodi Township Master Plan update

Due to the amount of time the final site plan approval of Arbor Preserve took, there is no update to either the Lodi Township Master Plan update or the Solar Ordinance Update.

Marsh moved to postpone Old Business a. Lodi Township Master Plan update and Old Business b. Solar Ordinance Update until the next meeting. Second by Vestergaard. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

b. Solar Ordinance Update

See motion under Old Business a. Lodi Township Master Plan update.

8. New Business:

a. Copperleaf Crossing/Creature Conservancy: Set date of Public Hearing on revised Area Plan

Due to a conflict of interest, Marsh recused himself to the audience.

Vestergaard moved to set the public hearing for the revised Area Plan for Copperleaf Crossing/Creature Conservancy for November 25, 2025. Second by Sweetland. A roll call vote was taken. Sweetland=aye, Vestergaard=aye, Strader=aye, Stevenson=aye, Rogers=aye, Froberg=aye, Marsh=abstain. Motion carried.

Froberg asked Township Attorney Jesse O'Jack the following questions:

- How did an entity become a USDA Class C Exhibitor and not get caught in the review process?
- Do PUDs get reviewed on a regular basis? O'Jack stated that PUDs do not get reviewed after approval unless the Township is notified by someone that they are no longer in compliance.
- A USDA Class C Exhibitor does not appear to be discussed under the Zoning Ordinance. Does that mean that it is not allowed or not addressed? O'Jack said that the question is whether it is not allowed or if the use is close enough to an already defined category to be reviewed under those guidelines. Froberg stated that she looked under the Zoning Ordinance for any keywords that might apply to Creature Conservancy and was not able to find anything. O'Jack stated that he has not looked, but would be surprised if anyone has something about USDA Class C Exhibitors addressed in their Zoning Ordinance. Froberg said that she checked the Zoning Ordinances for all of the townships in Washtenaw County and found that half of them address the Class C Exhibitor through an exotic animal ordinance. O'Jack asked if those ordinances were in the Zoning Ordinance or if they were regulatory ordinances. Froberg said she would send the Clerk and O'Jack what she found.
- What would the plans be reviewed against since there is no ordinance that applies to a USDA Class C Exhibitor? O'Jack said that it would be reviewed against the Zoning

Ordinance.

- Would it be helpful to review the ordinances for all of the non-zoo USDA Class C Exhibitors in the State of Michigan? O'Jack said it would only be helpful if the Township decided it wanted to proceed with a regulation of that type. Froberg said she would find an example to share to see if the Township is interested in pursuing a similar ordinance.
- Where does public information such as that included on a 501c3's 990 tax form come into play in the review process? O'Jack said that if the Township is not reviewing Special Districts, then it does not make a difference. For this specific review, O'Jack said that it could be provided to the Planning Commission for consideration at a public meeting.

Strader stated that she has a number of things that she would like to tweak in the Zoning Ordinance based on things learned from previous reviews. Strader asked O'Jack how to go about making those changes. O'Jack stated that he would double check, but according to his understanding, it is within the Planning Commission's purview to initiate changes to the Zoning Ordinance for approval or denial by the Board of Trustees.

Strader asked if this review will function like a review of a brand-new PUD. O'Jack stated that that is how this review will work. If the Planning Commission feels that there is additional information that needs provided in order to make their decision, then they would need to ask the applicant for that information.

Strader asked, in this case, does the applicant need to receive re-approval from all applicable government agencies for items such as the health department, building department, water and sewer department, etc.

Froberg stated that under the USDA Class C Exhibitor license, if an entity wants to add different species or exceed the amount of a certain species than they are currently licensed for, the entity needs to apply to the USDA for that. That process can take up to 90 days. This process does not mean that that entity does not need to follow local laws and permitting processes. Since Creature Conservancy is not a rescue or a rehabilitation center, they are not allowed to keep any animal that they are not licensed for that may be dropped off at Creature Conservancy. The veterinary clinic can only provide veterinary services for an animal for up to one week. This means that planning needs to be made under the USDA license for any changes which allows Creature Conservancy to also plan and receive zoning compliance for any changes to be made.

Strader also asked if there is a way to balance the public vs the property owner in regards to future changes that may need to be made. O'Jack stated that his understanding was that procedures for future changes would be written down and approved during the review process similar to a developer agreement or a master deed.

Township liability regarding these issues was discussed as well.

With the conflict of interest over, Marsh returned to the Planning Commission.

9. Public Comment

Public comment began at 7:44 pm. No comments were received from the public. Public comment ended at 7:44 pm.

10. Reports

A. Board of Trustees: Marsh reviewed the most recent Board of Trustees meeting on October 20, 2025.

Marsh asked O'Jack if the Planning Commission could have a FYI section similar to the one on the Board of Trustee agenda added to the Planning Commission agenda in order to allow questions, comments, and discussion from Commissioners for items that are not on the agenda. Specifically, as the Board of Trustees representative, he was interested in knowing what the Commission wants to be taken to the Board of Trustees. O'Jack said it could be added, but may require an amendment to the Planning Commission's Bylaws. Sweetland stated that he feels this is covered under the Commissioners Report section. After further discussion, it was decided to address this under the Board of Trustees report section and if that is not sufficient, then look at adding something different to the agenda.

Marsh asked if it would be a good idea to add a question to applications asking how the request fits with the Master Plan. Strader was interested in adding it to the Zoning Ordinance as an item under review checklists. O'Jack said that that could be added to applications, but it likely would not be applicable for all applications or cases and the Planning Commission would need to have concrete reasoning for why it would appear on some applications and not others and make sure that it is consistent. O'Jack stated that the contents of the Master Plan may be the reason that the Township wins or loses in court if it comes to that. O'Jack also recommended having a list of specific questions asked such as if it fits with the future land use plan. Township Planner Smith stated that with a PUD, rezoning, or Special Land use, the specific criteria that that application is reviewed against is contained in the Zoning Ordinance and typically the first item is if it is compatible with the Master Plan in terms of future land use and is it supported by goals and objectives. That is something that Smith would review during her review of a submittal.

Sweetland asked if there are any cases where the Master Plan would not hold any weight. O'Jack discussed hypothetical examples.

Strader stated that she is interested in beefing up the preliminary site plan review checklist. In the process of recent reviews, it became clear to Strader that preliminary site plan reviews need to be completed more thoroughly to help prevent issues at the time of final site plan review.

B. Commissioners: Strader got a letter from the City of Ann Arbor Planning Commission for feedback on their land use plan update. Strader asked Township Planner Smith and the Commissioners to review that update so that it can be discussed at the next meeting to see if any comments should be sent to the City of Ann Arbor.

A public hearing by EGLE regarding Arbor Preserve is happening tonight regarding Wetlands Protection and on November 5, 2025 regarding the Wastewater Treatment Plants. O'Jack reminded the Commissioners that as representatives from the Township, they can listen in on the public hearing, but it is safest to not comment due to the terms of the Consent Judgement. Strader asked if comments would be able to be made if stated and

made as a private citizen. O'Jack was unsure, but stated that would be potentially putting the Township in liability.

O'Jack reviewed the results of the lawsuit against Saline Township regarding the data center and exclusionary zoning. Strader asked O'Jack to let the Planning Commission know if there is anything that needs changed in the Master Plan in order to protect the Township.

Marsh stated that he learned that if he were a developer, that he could buy property now, cut down all the trees, wait five years to develop the land. At that point, tree removal and tree replacement would not be an issue. Marsh asked if that was anything that could be changed. O'Jack stated probably not and reviewed some court cases surrounding trees.

C. Planning Consultant: None

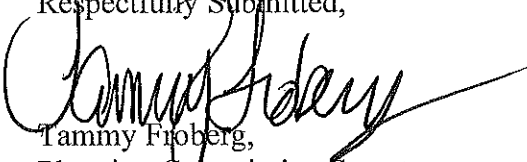
D. Engineering Consultant: None

11. Adjournment

Sweetland moved to adjourn at 8:21 pm. Second by Marsh. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 25, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,


Tammy Froberg,
Planning Commission Secretary


Michelle Joppeck,
Recording Secretary

