



Lodi Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

3755 Pleasant Lake Road Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

May 26, 2026 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, Meiners, Rentschler, Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Sweetland
Absent: None
Others Present: Recording Secretary Michelle Joppeck,
Township Planner Hannah Firlit,
Township Engineer MC Moritz,
Township Attorney Jesse O'Jack,
Township Supervisor Jacob Schaible,
Craig Naebeck, Kathy VanKoevering, Barry Wauldron and five other members
of the public

3. Approval of Agenda

The Master Plan is not ready for discussion so it needs to be removed from the agenda. Froberg requested to add a discussion and request to ask the Board of Trustees to start working on an Exotic and Wild Animal ordinance to New Business.

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

4. Public Hearing: Request by C&S Lawn Care (Craig Naebeck) for a Special Use Permit for a Lawn Care business, on the property located at 3785 S. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Lodi Township parcel M-13-10-300-014

Sweetland moved to open the public comment section of the public hearing at 7:03 pm. Second by Stevenson. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

The applicant explained what has happened since the previous discussion regarding the request and provided written answers to some of the questions that the Planning Commission previously had.

Township Planner Hannah Firlit reviewed her report dated May 20, 2026 reviewing the application in question. Township Engineer MC Moritz reviewed her report dated May 19, 2026, but stressed that most items in her report are recommendations and not requirements.

Numerous questions were asked by Planning Commissioners regarding the reports and items brought up in the reports which included:

- What would be the process for correcting items that disagree between the application and the provided plans since the applicant is not the property owner? As long as the property owner signs off on the final plan, it is not necessary to revise the application to match the plans.
- Is this a retail business or will anyone from the public be coming to the property? No, the public does not come to the property at all.
- Is a swale going to be built? Yes. What type of timeline is needed to construct the swale? It should be able to be completed by December 1, 2026. Are there requirements that the swale needs to meet? There are no requirements, but Washtenaw County has some recommendations.
- With the slope of the land, where does the water run off? The water runs towards the West.
- Does the Township review Special Use permits after they have been approved? Yes, every two years.
- How many trucks (pickup and dump trucks) will be located on site? About 20 trucks total. Are there any plans to increase that number? Not currently
- What potential environment hazards are stored on the site? Liquid chemicals are stored in lockable storage lockers per requirements from MDARD. The fertilizers come in bags on pallets so they are stacked up and stored inside. There is a fuel station on site containing 4 above ground double barrel fuel containers located outside that contain between 300-500 gallons each. One contains off-road diesel fuel, one contains on-road diesel fuel, one contains mixed gas, and the last contains regular gas.
- Other than moving piles of woodchips or stone around, are there any other activities that would create noise that might disturb residential neighbors? They do split wood which is sold and delivered.
- Do you have live plants on site? They keep a small nursery stock of plants that they use on job sites.
- Where are the office staff parking spaces located? At the existing barn which is in a different place.
- What is the flooring of the new buildings? Concrete
- Assuming the Planning Commission recommended to the Board of Trustees that one paved parking spot at the office location and one paved parking spot at the new building be added for ADA requirements, how long would you need to take care of that? 60 days
- Are you going to have an apron in front of the barn? They were not planning on it, but have talked about adding one to the existing barn.
- Do you need a loading zone or do you have a loading zone? Loading zones are not needed because materials are loaded next to the bunker containing those materials. Flatbed trucks are loaded with equipment in the yard.
- Do you know what is in a landscaping plan? There will be a solid white vinyl fence along the northern property line and they would follow the Zoning Ordinance along the road for the Greenbelt landscaping. How quickly could that be added to the plan and have it turned around? They were planning on letting MCI know what needs added or updated and they would get it ready in time for the Board of Trustees meeting. Who reviews their landscaping plan and when would it need to be received in order to be reviewed in time for the Board of Trustees meeting? If it is to go in the Board packet, it would be needed on Thursday. If the

Board of Trustees is comfortable with receiving it that night, Firlit would need it by Tuesday morning. Can you submit it to the Clerk by Thursday, May 28, 2026? They will need to get with MCI to see if they can get it done that quickly. Would you be willing to have a Greenbelt strip from the existing driveway all the way to the North and then wrap it around until the white fence? They said that they wanted to screen the whole northern property line, but were unsure how far the white fence was allowed to go to the road, but they would definitely connect the Greenbelt landscaping to the fence.

- What color is the metal siding of the building? White
- Are you going to have dumpsters? Yes, there is one in the proposed bunker area on the East end. Any plans for additional dumpsters? No. Is the dumpster already there? Yes.
- Will the lighting on the outside of the building be down shielded? Yes. Are they dusk until dawn lights? Yes. Can details on the lights be turned in with the landscaping plan by Thursday? Yes.
- Any signs out front? No signs

Having made it through the consultant reviews, the floor was opened for questions or comments from members of the public.

A member of the public commented that as a non-retail business, any member of the public who has trouble walking is apt to drive up to the door and pull in and talk; no special parking spot is necessary. Also, most wheelchairs are made to be able to get around on gravel.

Sweetland moved to close the public comment section of the public hearing at 8:30 pm. Second by Stevenson. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

The notes taken for Findings of Facts and conditions during the discussion were reviewed.

Froberg moved to recommend approval to the Board of Trustees due to the following Findings of Facts with the following conditions.

Findings of Facts:

Ordinance Standard: Section 43.04 Standards for Special Use Approval.

Findings:

1. Approximately 20 trucks including 3- and 5-yard dump trucks (all are under the 12-yard capacity maximum).
2. The Township Engineering review letter notes additional permits/approval that will likely be required, including Washtenaw County SESC, Washtenaw County Road Commission, and the Saline Area Fire Department. The operation is expected to comply with all applicable requirements from County agencies, building department, and other applicable agencies.
3. Recommended water management for the first inch of run off by Township Engineer
 - a. Applicant plans to put in a dry well or detention area if needed
4. The business splits wood and delivers as a service.
5. Plans include installation of three lights on the pole barn. See condition of approval to provide types of lights to confirm compliance.
6. Retail sales are not planned on the site.
 - a. The site is not used for any type of public interaction

Ordinance Standard: Section 40.16 Landscape Businesses.

Findings:

1. Retail sales are not planned on the site.
 - a. The site is not used for any type of public interaction.
2. This existing business has approximately 20 trucks all under the 12-yard maximum size. There is no planned increased traffic for the existing business.
3. This is an existing business that has not historically caused impacts to nearby residences.
4. The business stores chemicals in storage lockers along with fertilizers in bags on pallets. There are 4 fuel stations with approximately 300-500 gallons (double barrels) each.
5. This is a non-retail location (public not visiting). There is a small nursery stock along with the stone, mulch and top soil that are kept on site.

Ordinance Standard: Section 44.08 Required Site Plan Information

Findings:

1. The building has a 20-foot height to the eave of the roof.
2. There are 25 parking spots on site:
 - a. 22 parking spots for the new building
 - b. 3 parking spots for the old building which is used in part as an office
3. To be ADA compliant, one paved parking spot will be located near the building that serves as an office must be constructed. See conditions of approval
4. No designated loading zone is needed; loading is done by material bunkers.
5. The gravel material in the parking lot has been recommended. See conditions of approval for additional information. No stripping will be installed due to material.
6. A landscaping plan that is in compliance is required as a condition of approval. See approval conditions for additional information.
7. Additional approval for installation of the 6-foot fence is not required. Applicant indicates a solid white vinyl fence will be installed.
8. The pole barn will be constructed so that the roof and leans are all one.
9. A fire department review will be required.
10. Three lights will be installed on the new pole barn. The type of lights will be sent to the Township Planner as part of the conditional approval. See below for additional information.
11. Dumpsters will reside in the proposed East bunker.
12. No signage is planned at this time.

Conditions of Approval

1. The property owners will sign off on the updated pole barn dimensions of 104 x 60 with 2 leans.
2. The swale on the North side will be built by 12/1/26. The Township Engineer will provide Washtenaw County guidelines for the build.
3. The site data chart on the site plan will be corrected to reflect 25 parking spaces (22 at the new building plus 3 office spaces at the existing building). The 33 spaces on the current site data chart are incorrect.
4. Provide one paved parking spot for the office building with accessibility to the building to comply with ADA. Must be completed within 60 days. Note: additional paved parking spots may be determined by State of Michigan requirements.
5. Alternative gravel as material for the parking is allowed based on the following:
 - a. The public will not be accessing the site.
 - b. Landscape work requires someone who can walk on gravel.

- c. Business vehicle weight is not practical for concrete or asphalt and will cause increased wear and tear.
- d. Gravel is a less impervious surface.
- 6. The landscaping plan will be submitted by 5/28/2026.
 - a. The Township Planner will review the plans and provide information on compliance to the Board of Trustees.
- 7. The existing trees on the South side of the existing driveway are sufficient as Greenbelt landscaping for this portion of the property.
- 8. The white vinyl solid fence is sufficient as the screening on the North property line. The Board of Trustees should establish a timeline for installation.
- 9. The applicant will obtain all required permits including Fire Department approval
 - a. The Township Engineer will email the fire chief for approval on behalf of the applicant.
- 10. Submit the type of lights that will be installed to the Township Planner by 5/28/2026.
 - a. The Township Planner will provide information on compliance to the Board of Trustees.

Second by Strader. A roll call vote was taken. Froberg=aye, Rentschler=aye, Meiners=aye, Rogers=aye, Stevenson=aye, Strader=aye, Sweetland=aye. Motion carried.

5. Public Comment

Public comment began at 8:37 pm. No comments were received from the public. Public comment ended at 8:37 pm.

6. Approval of Minutes – 4/28/2026 and 5/5/2026

Sweetland moved to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2026 Lodi Township Planning Commission regular meeting as presented. Second by Meiners. A voice vote was taken. Aye=6, Nay=none, abstain=Strader. Motion carried.

Sweetland moved to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2026 meeting as presented. Second by Strader. A voice vote was taken. Aye=6, Nay=none, abstain=Froberg. Motion carried.

7. Old Business:

a. Data Center Zoning Ordinance

Township Planner Firlit updated the Planning Commission on the status of the Data Center ordinance. Individual Planning Commissioners previously submitted their concerns and what they would like addressed in the ordinance. Firlit went through those concerns, but was unable to get those items to Township Attorney Jesse O'Jack until Friday so they have not had time to sit down and go through those yet. Firlit is working through the template ordinance she has access to and is dividing it up by scale (accessory, small, large or hyperscale data centers). She is also researching the idea of an energy overlay district and what proximity would be needed to what power of energy lines for each scale of data center. Based on that research, there would be data centers that could use the existing power lines that run through Lodi Township. Firlit said that it would make sense to have it as a special land use if it is a Zoning Ordinance and to have it designated in the Industrial District.

Strader asked if the properties currently zoned Industrial are large enough to consider for any larger data center. Firlit said the minimum lot size for larger data centers is about 10 acres, but it is possible to have a small data center in an office building that is not noticeable.

Sweetland asked if the properties currently zoned Industrial have high transmission lines. Firlit said that the only high transmission lines in Lodi Township are East of Zeeb Road. There is a higher voltage line that goes through Freedom Township.

Meiners stated that after thinking about it, he thinks the energy overlay district makes sense because we do not know what the next thing after data centers will be and it would be nice to already have something in place instead of acting reactively. It might also make it easier to defend the Township against lawsuits.

O'Jack said that exceptions would probably need to be built into an energy overlay district to account for what the State and federal government removes from local control.

Firlit said she will plan to have a draft ordinance to review by the next Planning Commission meeting, but she will need some direction on whether the Planning Commission wants to have a regulator ordinance, zoning ordinance or both. She will also bring the information she has gotten regarding the energy overlay district for the next meeting.

O'Jack stated that the moratorium could be extended, but the Township would need proof that they are working on it and making progress.

O'Jack also explained the difficulty in proving negative consequences of things like data centers. Meiners asked if it would be possible to require them to provide studies and data showing the consequences of building.

Schaible reminded the Planning Commission that the more restrictive Townships are on these issues, the more likely it is that the State is going to remove Township control. Schaible noted that that should not affect the decisions the Township makes, but the Township should be cognizant of it.

8. New Business:

a. Exotic and Wild Animal Ordinance

Strader stated that the Planning Commission is interested in creating an Exotic and Wild Animal Ordinance to regulate any potential future organizations that may want to come to Lodi Township. The Planning Commission also has a list of ordinances that it would like to update based on recent projects that have come before the Planning Commission. Strader asked how the Planning Commission should proceed with these items. O'Jack recommended ranking the items the Planning Commission would like to update in addition to ranking how much time and effort would be required to update those items to give the Board of Trustees more information in making their decisions. Froberg said she could work on a draft Exotic and Wild Animal ordinance and can put the other items the Planning Commission would like to update in a spreadsheet to be able make deciding on a ranking easier for the July Planning Commission meeting since the June meeting is fairly full already.

Sweetland requested that these items not be started until the Master Plan is completed so that the Planning Commission can complete something before starting something else.

Froberg asked if a motion to ask the Board of Trustees to start work on an Exotic and Wild Animal Ordinance needed to be made. O'Jack stated that the Planning Commission can work on whatever they want to work on, but they would be wasting their time if the Board of Trustees is not interested in it. O'Jack recommended making a motion stating that the Planning Commission believes that it is an important thing to begin working on right away

and asking if the Board of Trustees agrees.

Strader asked if an Exotic and Wild Animal Ordinance is created, would that apply to future changes to existing organizations or would whatever ordinances are in place when the organization was approved be all that would be allowed to apply. Froberg said that, based on her research, whatever animals were already currently owned would not be regulated by the new ordinance, but any additional or replacement animals obtained would be regulated by that new ordinance. O'Jack said he would have to see how it was written to be able to tell how it would work. O'Jack also stated that the ordinance should be based on types of animals (i.e., smelly animals or large animals) rather than individual specific animals (i.e., lion vs tiger).

Froberg asked if she has permission to work on an Exotic and Wild Animal ordinance on her personal time or if she needs to obtain approval first. O'Jack said she could work on it in her own time, but that she would need approval to spend Township funds by contacting O'Jack with questions.

O'Jack also cautioned about being careful about getting Animal Control involved because it could incur expenses for the Township.

9. Public Comment

Public comment began at 9:21 pm. No comments were received from the public. Public comment ended at 9:21 pm.

10. Reports

- A. Board of Trustees: Rentschler and Schaible reviewed the most recent Board of Trustees meeting held on May 5, 2026. Questions were asked about the appointment process for replacing Matelski.
- B. Commissioners: None
- C. Planning Consultant: None
- D. Engineering Consultant: None

11. Adjournment

Sweetland moved to adjourn at 9:23 pm. Second by Stevenson. A voice vote was taken. Aye=all, Nay=none. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Sweetland,
Planning Commission Secretary



Michelle Joppeck,
Recording Secretary



