

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
May 8, 2025

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM. at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present

Shawn Martinie  
Bill Maschewske  
Kathy Kuck  
Phil Crum  
Michelle Gillespie

Absent

Steve Ambrose  
Lydia Brown

Also present were contracted Planner Gregory Ransford, Zoning Administrator Andrea Goodell, and one member of the public. The attendance sheet is attached.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Shawn Martinie to approve the agenda of the May 8, 2025 meeting as written.  
The motion carried unanimously.

Adopting of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Kathy Kuck to approve as written the minutes of the April 22, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.  
The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

The specific purpose of this special meeting was to review changes to the Zoning Ordinance proposed by Greg Ransford, the Township contracted Planner and Principal from Fresh Coast Planning, following the recent adoption by Robinson Township of a new Master Land Use Plan. The proposed changes for this meeting are generally in response to Commercial Strategies that were identified and approved in the new Master Land Use Plan and now need to be included in the Zoning Ordinance for implementation. Chairperson Martinie stated the Planning Commission would review the Zoning Ordinance amendments proposed in the order presented in Gregory Ransford's Memorandum dated April 27, 2025 (copy attached). The following is a list of the Zoning Ordinance sections reviewed and the consensus of the Planning Commission regarding accepting, revising, or rejecting each proposed. If the change is rejected, the proposed Zoning Ordinance text remains unchanged.

The first six items were carry-overs from a previous planning meeting.

1. Section 4.28 Lot, Use – This section still needs resolution.
2. Definition of Agritourism – revisions accepted.
3. Definition of Buffer – Definition accepted.
4. Section 4.37 Principal Buildings on a Lot or Parcel of Land – The revision was accepted.
5. Section 9.2(H) – It was agreed to delete this item.
6. Section 9.4(A) – Per Township Attorney Bultje, the references to the Army Corp of Engineers are to remain included.

The following proposed changes were new and reviewed in the order of Planner Ransford's Memorandum.

#### Commercial Uses (Neighborhood Commercial District and General Business District)

**Strategy: Strengthen requirements for site design, which requirements address but are not necessarily limited to building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, location and screening of service delivery areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access.**

#### Section 4.34 Outdoor Lighting

1. Section 4.54(C)(1) – The prohibition of wall mounted lighting was discussed. It was agreed that Planner Ransford would prepare proposed text consolidating the requirements in Section 4.34 with Chapters 17 and 18.
2. Section 4.54(C)(4)(d) – Making a photometric plan required instead of optional was accepted.
3. Section 4.54(C)(5) – It was agreed to delete this section.

#### Section 4.54 Screening

1. Section 4.54(A) Outdoor Trash Storage – The proposed text was accepted, however, it is not clear what Zoning Districts are subject to this requirement. Gregory Ransford is to contact the Township Attorney to determine the applicable Zoning Districts for Sections 4.53 through 4.56.
2. Section 4.54(B) Off-Street Parking – The proposed changes were accepted.
3. Applicability – See comments for (A) above.

#### Section 4.56 – Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

1. Gregory Ransford is to contact the Township Attorney to determine the applicable Zoning Districts for Sections 4.53 through 4.56.

#### Chapter 12 – B-1 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District

1. Section 12.2(A) – The edit is accepted.

2. Section 12.2(D) – The changes were not accepted and no change to the text was made.
3. Section 12.2(E) – The proposed change is accepted.
4. Section 12.3(A) – The proposed changes were accepted.
5. Section 12.3(B)(4) – It was agreed to not make any changes to the existing text.
6. Section 12.3(C) – It was agreed to leave the existing Zoning Ordinance text unchanged.
7. Section 12.4 – The edits proposed were accepted.

#### Chapter 13 – B-2 General Business Zoning District

1. Section 13.2(B) – Accept edits.
2. Section 13.2(C) – Accept edits.
3. Section 13.2(L) – It was agreed to use the proposed wording from 13.3(J), including subsections (1) and (2). The limit on the number of employees would be removed.
4. Section 13.2(T) and (W) – Accept edits.
5. Section 13.3(B)(4) – Accept edits.
6. Section 13.3(B)(6) – Accept edits.
7. Section 13.3(C)(2) – Accept edits.
8. Section 13.3(C)(4) – Accept edits.
9. Section 13.3(G) – Accept edits.
10. Section 13.3(J) – Accept edits but delete the word “marketable” from (J)(2).
11. Section 13.4 Front Yard Landscaping Requirements – Accept the new text.

#### Chapter 22 Parking

1. Section 22.1(B) – Accept edit.
2. Section 22.2(C) – Accept edit.
3. Section 22.2(H) – Accept edit.
4. Section 22.2(J) – Accept edit.
5. Table 22.2 – The Planning Commission would like the table to remain unchanged.

#### Chapter 31 Site Plan Review

1. Section 31.1(A) and (B) – Accept the edits.
2. Section 31.2 -- Accept the edits and delete the requirement of 17 copies.
3. Section 31.4 -- Accept the edit and delete the 90- day requirement.
4. Section 31.6 – Accept the edit except do not eliminate the requirement of 17 copies. Planner Ransford is to check if it is a requirement to notify the applicant in writing. If it is not, strike this requirement.
5. Section 31.7(B) – Accept the edit.
6. Section 31.7(G) – The edit is rejected.

At this time, the remainder of Section 31.7 and all of 31.8 were omitted from review. Planner Ransford is to re-evaluate the edits and rewrite these two sections for later review.

7. Section 31.14 – Accept the edit.

8. Architectural Standards – Planner Ransford is to provide draft text that would coordinate standards with the M-231 Overlay Districts with the intention of avoiding strip mall appearance.

**Strategy: Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which development would negatively impact the Recharge Area.**

#### Chapter 12 B-1 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District

Section 4.58 – Accept the edit.

#### Chapter 13 B-2 General Business Zoning District

Section 4.58 – Accept the edit.

#### M-231 Commercial Uses (Primary Growth Area – Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay District

**Strategy: Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

#### Chapter 18

1. Section 18.1 – Edit accepted.
2. Section 18.2 – Edit accepted.
3. Section 18.2(A)(3)(a) – Edit accepted.
4. Section 18.2(B)(3) – Edit accepted.
5. Section 18.2(B)(11) – Edit accepted.
6. Section 18.2(C)(9) – Edit accepted.
7. Section 18.3(B)(1) – Edit accepted.
8. Section 18.3(C)(2) – Edit accepted.
9. Section 18.4(B)(4) – Edit accepted.
10. Section 18.5(C) – Edit accepted.
11. Section 18.4(H) – Edit accepted.
12. Section 18.6 – Edit accepted.
13. Chapter 18, Exhibit A – It was agreed this map needs to go with the Zoning Map.

**Strategy: Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which development would negatively impact the Recharge Area.**

#### Chapter 18 LMDCOD Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay Zoning District.

Section 18.7 – Accept reference to Section 4.58.

M-231 Commercial Uses (Secondary Growth Area – Lincoln Street Overlay District)

**Strategy: Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 17 of the Zoning Ordinance**

1. Section 17.1 – Accept edits.
2. Section 17.2(B) – Reject edit and leave text unchanged.
3. Section 17.2(E)(1) – Do not change current text.
4. Section 17.2(E)(2) – Accept the edit.
5. Section 17.3(A) – Accept edit.
6. Section 17.4(C) – Accept edit.
7. Section 17.5(A)(5)(a) – Accept edit.
8. Permitted Signs and Requirements Table – Accept edit.
9. Section 17, Exhibit B – Accept edits and move to Zoning Map.

**Strategy: Consider standards to promote pedestrian safety**

Chapter 17 – LSOD Lincoln Street Overlay Zoning District

Section 17.4(E) (New) – Accept new text.

**Strategy: Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area Identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which development would negatively impact the Recharge Area**

Chapter 17 – LSOD Lincoln Street Overlay Zoning District

Section 17.4(F) – Accept the reference to Section 4.58.

This concluded review of the proposed Zoning Ordinance changes submitted by Planner Ransford.

The next planning meeting was scheduled for June 12, 2025.

Master Land Use Plan Discussion for MDR Classification

The current requirement for sanitary sewer for subdivisions, PUD developments, plats, and rezonings to R-1 in the Medium Density Residential classification in the new Master Land Use Plan was discussed. Bill Maschewske read an excerpt from the September 12, 2023 Planning Commission minutes that stated “It was agreed to delete the requirement for Sanitary Sewer connection for Medium Density Residential Uses since it is not currently available in the Township.” This change, however, did not get made to the text prior to forwarding to the Township Board. Correction will wait until the Zoning Ordinance review is completed pending other changes that may be made to the Master Land Use Plan.

### Pay Bills

A motion was made by Shawn Martinie and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to pay salaries for the May 8, 2025 Planning Commission meeting (five members present, two members absent). The motion carried unanimously.

### Adjournment

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Phil Crum to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:43 PM. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary  
Robinson Township Planning Commission

### Attachments:

Attendance Sheet for the May 8, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.

Memorandum dated April 27, 2025 from contracted Township Planner Gregory Ransford  
Regarding Zoning Ordinance Rewrite—Commercial Strategies



**SIGN IN SHEET**  
**Special Meeting of the**  
**Planning Commission**  
**Thursday, May 8, 2025 - 7:00 pm**

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE

KRIG SCHULTZ

Kraig D. Schultz



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## MEMORANDUM

To: Robinson Township Planning Commission  
From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA  
Date: April 27, 2025  
Re: Zoning Ordinance Rewrite – Commercial Strategies

Pursuant to your continued direction regarding the Robinson Township Zoning Ordinance (RTZO) Rewrite project, we reviewed Chapter Five – Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses of the Robinson Township Master Plan (RTMP) and the set of Strategies therein. As a result of our review, attached are our suggested revisions to the RTZO as a result of those Strategies as well as our findings related to the general audit. Coupled with those suggested revisions, we raise several items for your review and direction.

It is important to note that this review, while focused on the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District, the General Business Zoning District, the Lincoln Street Overlay Zoning District, and the Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay Zoning District for the purpose of this memorandum, may be piecemealed over the course of this project to complete the full review of the RTZO. As a result of this, the Planning Commission should not conclude that this is a complete review of all possible provisions of the RTZO related to the Strategies within the Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses Chapter. However, it is nonetheless very comprehensive. In that regard, we have formally completed our review of the following sections and chapters of the RTZO to provide our recommendations herein:

- Section 4.34, Section 4.54, and Section 4.56
- Chapters 12, 13, 17, 18, 22, and 31

Prior to outlining the relevant Strategies from Chapter Five of the RTMP, below we summarize your most recent direction from the previous meeting regarding Chapter Four – Residential Uses and general provisions within the RTZO.

As you will recall, you directed us to perform the following:

- Definition of Agritourism – add “(5)” after the word “five” (*See page identifier Chapter 3 – Page 3 of the attached*)
- Definition of Buffer – revise so that mature trees are the primary buffer component but allow for the installation of a berm and or trees to achieve the same effect when the land area is absent trees (*See page identifier Chapter 3 – Page 5 of the attached*)
- Section 4.37 – add “A-1” and “A-2” (*See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 26 and Page 27 of the attached*)
- Section 9.2H – strike in its entirety (*See page identifier Chapter 9 – Page 1 of the attached*)
- Section 9.4A – verify with Township Legal Counsel whether the reference to the Army Corp of Engineers should remain in the draft language (*See page identifier Chapter 9 – Page 3 of the attached*)

We believe the attached accomplishes your direction. In regards to Section 9.4A and the Township Legal Counsel opinion, below is a copy of his reply to your inquiry.

“I’m reluctant to completely eliminate any reference to the federal requirements regarding floodplain matters. I understand there are both state requirements and federal requirements, although I further understand



that the state and federal government have a cooperative working relationship so that it may not be necessary to actually deal with the federal agency (i.e. the ACE). However, that cooperative working relationship is always subject to change. My inclination would be to simply require as a condition of getting any building permit from the applicable township that the applicant establish compliance with all applicable state and federal floodplain laws and regulations, either by having the relevant permits from the state and/or federal agencies, or by having the appropriate state or federal agency specify in writing that there are no applicable requirements under state or federal law, as the case may be.

In other words, if EGLE specified in writing that all applicable state and federal requirements have been met, or that there are no applicable state and federal requirements that apply, I would be satisfied with that."

As noted on page one of this memorandum, in addition to the revisions related to the Residential Uses Chapter, our first set of recommendations in regards to the Strategies from Chapter Five – Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses are outlined below.

#### Chapter Five – Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses, Strategies

Chapter Five – Commercial Uses & M-231 Commercial Uses of the RTMP identifies the following Strategies:

- Commercial Uses (Neighborhood Commercial District & General Business District)
  - Strengthen requirements for site design, which requirements address but are not necessarily limited to building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, location and screening of service and delivery areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access
  - Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area
- M-231 Commercial Uses (Primary Growth Area – Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay District)
  - Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance
  - Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area
- M-231 Commercial Uses (Secondary Growth Area – Lincoln Street Overlay District)
  - Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 17 of the Zoning Ordinance
  - Consider standards to promote pedestrian safety
  - Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area

As you are aware, most of the Strategies are intended to revise provisions that regulate land use requiring approval by the Planning Commission or Board of Trustees. These revisions strengthen the Goals and Recommendations within the related RTMP chapter that precede the Strategy by creating actual law. All of the recommended revisions to the RTZO are attached. Following each recommendation below, we provide notations in italic font regarding the location of the recommended revision in the attached.

#### Commercial Uses (Neighborhood Commercial District & General Business District)

*Strategy: Strengthen requirements for site design, which requirements address but are not necessarily limited to building materials, location and design of refuse storage areas, location and screening of service and delivery areas, parking lot design, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and site access*

Given that this Strategy contains numerous attributes for commercial development, we changed our ordinary presentation of proposed recommendations within our memorandum to a list of RTZO sections and related bullet points to explain the proposed changes, with no particular order. Given this structure, on occasion we simply

indicate that “we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory” related to a section reference because it is easier to direct you to the section revision without explanation than repeating the entire provision where minor changes occurred.

#### Section 4.34 – Outdoor Lighting

- (C)(1) – This commercial requirement prohibits parking lot lights from being attached to any building. Given that technologies improve and other provisions of the RTZO prohibit light trespass and glare, the Planning Commission may wish to consider rescinding this prohibition, particularly where parking is limited to one row abutting a building. Given that we are raising this provision for your discussion, we have not drafted any proposed changes.

*(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 25 of the attached)*

- (C)(4)(d) – In an effort to strengthen the lighting requirements for commercial uses, we recommend mandating a photometric plan, which is currently written as an option to require. It is our regular practice to always request a photometric because it is the scientific means to prove compliance.

*(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 26 of the attached)*

- (C)(5) – As a result of our recommendation to create Section C(4)(d), this provision is proposed for deletion.

*(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 26 of the attached)*

#### Section 4.54 – Screening

- (A) Outdoor Trash Storage – in our experience, most communities seek to screen trash storage areas in their entirety rather than simply from the street. Given this, and in an effort to strengthen the Township regulations pursuant to this Strategy, we propose complete screening of the trash cans or dumpster from all four sides as well as basic location (side or rear yard), and construction requirements. If the Planning Commission desires more robust requirements, we can provide additional provisions for your consideration.

*(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 66 of the attached)*

- Off-Street Parking – we propose restructuring the subsections numerically (as a result of creating the new subsection (2)) as well as reorganizing the wording within the new subsection (1) of Section 4.54(B) to read better without changes to its intent. That said, we propose striking “will” for “shall” to be consistent with mandatory terminology throughout the RTZO. The new subsection (2) will require landscaping for parking lots of thirty or more parking spaces. The landscaping must be located within or about the parking lot, but shall also include islands within the parking lot to break up long rows of parking.

*(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 66 and Page 67 of the attached)*

- Finally, while not this language is not “incorrectly located,” we noticed that this section is sandwiched between sections specific to the Lincoln Street Overlay District and the Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay District. We contemplate whether it could be accidentally overlooked because of its location and may be better suited elsewhere in the RTZO.

#### Section 4.56 – Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

- While we do not propose any changes to this section at this time, we want to raise its content for your review because we are unsure of its intent. That is, this language appears to require sidewalks for, we

presume, any site subject to site plan review, including private roads. We suspect the Township did not intend to require sidewalks to be installed along every private road. Given this, we seek clarification from the Planning Commission regarding the intent of this section. Following discussion, we will be prepared to modify accordingly, if appropriate.

*(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 71 and Page 72 of the attached)*

#### Chapter 12 – B-1 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District

- Section 12.2(A) – we propose to add “in area” at its end

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 12.2(D) – while we suspect the 750 square foot limitation was on purpose, we propose to strike that limitation given it is a very small building that may never accommodate a post office or similar government office.

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 12.2(E) – we propose to revise the reference to minimum acreage to be consistent with other provisions of the RTZO and add “in area” at its end.

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 12.3(A) – we propose to add “in area” at its end

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 12.3(B)(4) – while we have not proposed any revisions at this time, we note that the language would limit an automobile service (gas) station to no more than six (6) pumps. We contemplate whether the Planning Commission desires to maintain this limitation. Candidly, we are unsure if the Township can successfully defend this limitation.

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 12.3(C) – we have concerns that the use identified herein is unfairly treated differently based on its building size or number of employees. We suspect that these types of limitations may be challenging to defend. We recommend that the Planning Commission directs us to discuss this provision with the Township Legal Counsel.

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- (New) Section 12.4 – unless we overlooked relevant provisions, this section proposes typical front yard landscaping for commercial sites.

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 3 of the attached)*

#### Chapter 13 – B-2 General Business Zoning District

- Section 13.2(B) – we propose to add “in area” at its end

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 13.2(C) – we propose to add the word “and,” which we believe you will find self-explanatory

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 13.2(L) – we propose striking the limitation of the number of employees. While we understand the intent of this language, we question whether this limitation will legally stand given that the General Business Zoning District is the largest commercial district within the Township and it seems contrary to accommodating larger businesses that are not home occupations, where we typically see an employee limitation. Certainly, if the Planning Commission agrees, we are happy to discuss this with the Township Legal Counsel.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 13.2(T) – we propose minor revisions to provide for clarity. We expect the proposed changes to be self-explanatory

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 13.2(W) – where used car sales are allowed, new car sales should also be allowed. We expect the proposed changes to be self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 13.3(B)(4) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 13.3(B)(6) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 13.3(C)(2) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 13.3(C)(4) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 13.3(G) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 13.3(J) – similar to Section 13.2(L), we propose striking the limitation of the number of employees. While we understand the intent of this language, we question whether this limitation will legally stand given that the General Business Zoning District is the largest commercial district within the Township and it seems contrary to accommodating larger businesses that are not home occupations, where we typically see an employee limitation. Certainly, if the Planning Commission agrees, we are happy to discuss this with the Township Legal Counsel.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 4 of the attached)*

- (New) Section 13.4 – unless we overlooked relevant provisions, this section proposes typical front yard landscaping for commercial sites.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 5 of the attached)*

#### Chapter 22 – Parking

- Section 22.1(B) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 22 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 22.2(C) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 22 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 22.2(H) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 22 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 22.2(I) – in the instance of deferred parking, the proposed revision to this section will require that the storm water system is designed during the initial site plan approval to accommodate the deferred parking so that the storm system does not need alterations (and site plan reapproval) at such time the deferred parking is required to be constructed by the Township or voluntarily by the property owner.

*(See page identifier Chapter 22 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- It is important to note that we have been advising our community clients to consider eliminating minimum parking requirements for commercial (and industrial) uses. Based on our experience, the vast majority of business owners know the amount of parking their business requires and oftentimes the local municipality ordinance requires far more than necessary, leading to excess impervious surface, loss of trees and other natural vegetation, and reduced aesthetics. Moreover, the rapidly changing consumer climate and means to obtain products and services has dramatically changed how minimum parking was historically calculated. Given all of this, we have not reviewed the minimum number of parking space requirements provided by Table 22-2 of this chapter. Alternatively, similar to your deferred parking provisions, the Township could permit an owner to establish their own minimum parking spaces but provide for an area for expansion, based on the type of use and general calculations.

#### Chapter 31 – Site Plan Review

- Section 31.1 – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 31.2 – given the modern day practice of electronic submission of files, and in our experience, that applicants will ask about the number of site plans necessary to process their application, we recommend striking reference to the number of copies within this section. Moreover, that number can fluctuate based on changes in staff and other needs (we have found communities needing less or more than a number specified).

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 31.4 – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 1 of the attached)*

Related, the language as currently written does not appear to allow the Preliminary Sketch Plan to be optional for the applicant. We contemplate whether the Township would like to provide for that option, as we have found it beneficial in other communities. Moreover, we have been frequently preparing applicants with a more final plan submission for the Planning Commission and the preliminary step has been "skipped." Given this, we would recommend the language is revised as optional.

- Section 31.6 – similar to Section 31.2 above, given the modern day practice of electronic submission of files, and in our experience, that applicants will ask about the number of site plans necessary to process their application, we recommend striking reference to the number of copies within this section. Moreover, that number can fluctuate based on changes in staff and other needs (we have found communities needing less or more than a number specified).

In addition to striking the number of copies, we also recommend striking the 90 day requirement of the Planning Commission to complete its review and provide a decision. As you know, oftentimes, a site plan review can exceed 90 days. We would not want the Township in a position to be challenged in court for exceeding that 90 day period.

We believe the remainder of the proposed revisions to this section are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(B) – in our experience, we have reviewed site plans submitted by architects and building elevations submitted by engineers, both of which have caused headaches for the communities. To resolve those issues, the professional seal of the engineer or architect (or other licensed professional, like a surveyor or landscape architect) was required for the applicable plan or drawing by the ordinance.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(G) – this language is proposed to be expanded by relocating the content of Section 31.8B from the Standards for Site Plan Review since said content seems more appropriate as required data for the site plan than a review standard.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 3 and Page 6 (for Section 31.8B deletion) of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(H) – this language is proposed to be expanded by relocating the content of Section 31.8E from the Standards for Site Plan Review since said content seems more appropriate as required data for the site plan than a review standard.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 3 and Page 6 (for Section 31.8E deletion) of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(Q) – this language is proposed to be expanded by relocating the content of Section 31.8N from the Standards for Site Plan Review since said content seems more appropriate as required data for the site plan than a review standard.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 4 and Page 7 (for Section 31.8N deletion) of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(R) – we believe the proposed changes read cleaner and are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 4 of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(U) – we believe the proposed changes read cleaner and are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 4 of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(Z) – the proposed changes would require architectural elevations rather than a preliminary sketch. These elevations are more commonplace than preliminary sketches. In addition, we frequently direct applicants to provide product specification sheets for all exterior building materials. As a result, we propose providing that requirement in this section.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 5 of the attached)*

- Section 31.7(AA) – this language is proposed to be relocated from Section 31.8P of the Standards for Site Plan Review since said content seems more appropriate as required data for the site plan than a review standard.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 5 and Page 7 (for Section 31.8P deletion) of the attached)*

Related, the existing subsection AA will shift to BB, and the existing subsection BB will shift to CC, and the existing subsection CC will become a new subsection DD. We note this because the Track Changes in Word did not clearly represent this shift and suggests that subsection AA is entirely new, when it exists but the content has shifted.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 5 of the attached)*

- Section 31.8 – it is important to note that we did not move every possible provision from this section to Section 31.7 as required data for site plan review, where more may have been justified in their relocation, but rather focused on the significant provisions we did not want “getting lost” in the standards of review.
- Section 31.8(A) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 5 of the attached)*

- Section 31.8(C) (New due to deletion) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 6 of the attached)*

- Section 31.8(H) (New due to deletion) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 6 of the attached)*

- Section 31.8(J) (New due to deletion) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 7 of the attached)*

- Section 31.8(K) (New due to deletion) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 7 of the attached)*

- Section 31.8(O) (New due to deletion) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 7 of the attached)*

- Section 31.14 – we propose striking a surety bond as an option because they are an unreliable means to secure finances for a township.

*(See page identifier Chapter 31 – Page 9 and Page 10 of the attached)*

- Finally, we note that neither the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District nor the General Business Zoning District contain minimum building material standards. We suspect this is intentional but considering the Strategy above, we contemplate whether the Planning Commission prefers some degree of minimum architecture in these Zoning Districts. As you know, the overlay zoning districts contain architectural standards.

**Strategy: Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area Identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which development would negatively impact the Recharge Area**

#### Chapter 12 – B-1 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District

- Given that we drafted language within Section 4.58 to address this Strategy in a previous set of recommendations, we propose Section 12.5 to simply reference that language.

*(See page identifier Chapter 12 – Page 3 of the attached)*

*(For Section 4.58, see page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 72 and Page 73 of the attached)*

#### Chapter 13 – B-2 General Business Zoning District

- Given that we drafted language within Section 4.58 to address this Strategy in a previous set of recommendations, we propose Section 13.5 to simply reference that language.

*(See page identifier Chapter 13 – Page 5 of the attached)*

*(For Section 4.58, see page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 72 and Page 73 of the attached)*

#### M-231 Commercial Uses (Primary Growth Area – Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay District)

**Strategy: Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance**

#### Chapter 18

- Section 18.1 – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 18.2 – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 18.2(A)(3)(a) – while we have not proposed any revisions at this time, we note that the language would limit an automobile service (gas) station to no more than eight (8) pumps. We contemplate whether the Planning Commission desires to maintain this limitation. Candidly, we are unsure if the Township can successfully defend this limitation.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 18.2(B)(3) – in our experience, wineries and distilleries are permitted in the same zoning district as microbreweries. Given this, we recommend including those uses in this section.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 18.2(B)(11) – we propose a minor revision to provide clarity to the language.



*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 18.2(C)(9) – we propose a minor revision to provide clarity to the language.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 18.3(B)(1) – we propose a minor revision to provide clarity to the language.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 4 of the attached)*

- Section 18.3(C)(2) – we presume that the Township did not intend to require displays within windows and as a result, we recommended revising “shall” to “may.” As you will note in the current and proposed language, the provision includes the option with the word “or” to address windows without a display.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 4 of the attached)*

- Section 18.4(B)(4) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 5 of the attached)*

- Section 18.4(C) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 5 of the attached)*

- Section 18.4(H) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory and presume that the Township intended for the identified pathway to be adjacent to the street, given that subsection (1) of this section excludes sidewalks that seem to be internal to the development.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 6 of the attached)*

- Section 18.6 – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 7 of the attached)*

- Chapter 18 Exhibit A – this map, identified as “Exhibit A” is not referenced within the text of Chapter 18. If it is not already on the Zoning Map, the exhibit identifies it as being part of the Zoning Map and should be relocated thereto.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 8 of the attached)*

***Strategy: Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which development would negatively impact the Recharge Area***

Chapter 18 – LMDCOD Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay Zoning District

- Given that we drafted language within Section 4.58 to address this Strategy in a previous set of recommendations, we propose Section 18.7 to simply reference that language.

*(See page identifier Chapter 18 – Page 7 of the attached)*

*(For Section 4.58, see page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 72 and Page 73 of the attached)*

M-231 Commercial Uses (Secondary Growth Area – Lincoln Street Overlay District)

**Strategy: Maintain or strengthen design standards provided in Chapter 17 of the Zoning Ordinance**

Chapter 17

- Section 17.1 – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 17.2(B) – similar to Section 12.2D, while we suspect the 750 square foot limitation was on purpose, we propose to strike that limitation given it is a very small building that may never accommodate a post office or similar government office.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 17.2(E)(1) – similar to two previous section revision recommendations and while we have not proposed any revisions at this time, we note that the language would limit an automobile service (gas) station to no more than four (4) pumps. We contemplate whether the Planning Commission desires to maintain this limitation. Candidly, we are unsure if the Township can successfully defend this limitation.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 1 of the attached)*

- Section 17.2(E)(2) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 17.3(A) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 2 of the attached)*

- Section 17.4(C) – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 3 of the attached)*

- Section 17.5(A)(5)a) – we propose this revision to be consistent with similar text, particularly in the same section.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 4 of the attached)*

- Permitted Signs and Requirements table – we believe the proposed changes are self-explanatory.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 4 through Page 7 of the attached)*

- Chapter 17 Exhibit B – this map, identified as “Exhibit B” is not referenced within the text of Chapter 17. If it is not already on the Zoning Map, the exhibit identifies it as being part of the Zoning Map and should be relocated thereto.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 8 of the attached)*

**Strategy: Consider standards to promote pedestrian safety**

Chapter 17 – LSOD Lincoln Street Overlay Zoning District

- (New) Section 17.4(E) – in order to achieve this Strategy, we propose utilizing the same language as that provided in Chapter 18 regarding the same.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 3 of the attached)*

**Strategy: Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which development would negatively impact the Recharge Area**

Chapter 17 – LSOD Lincoln Street Overlay Zoning District

- Given that we drafted language within Section 4.58 to address this Strategy in a previous set of recommendations, we propose Section 17.4(F) to simply reference that language.

*(See page identifier Chapter 17 – Page 4 of the attached)*

*(For Section 4.58, see page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 72 and Page 73 of the attached)*

#### Items of Note

While additional sections of the RTZO apply to the Lincoln Street Overlay Zoning District and the Lake Michigan Drive Commercial Overlay Zoning District, such as Section 4.53 and Section 4.55, given the length of this memorandum and the related proposed changes, we will address those sections and any other relevant provisions at a future meeting.

The proposed set of Zoning Ordinance Rewrite recommendations has been scheduled for your May 8, 2025 meeting. If you have any questions, please let me know.

GLR  
Planner

Attachments