

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
January 8, 2026

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

Present	Absent
Shawn Martinie Bill Maschewske Phil Crum Steve Ambrose Lydia Brown Kathy Kuck Michelle Gillespie	None

Also present were contracted Planner Gregory Ransford and Zoning Administrator Andrea Goodell. There were no members of the public present. The attendance sheet is not attached as it included no signatures.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Lydia Brown and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to approve the agenda of the January 8, 2026 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 November 13, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.
The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

The 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 adoption by Robinson Township of a new Master Land Use Plan. The proposed changes for this meeting are in response to a General Audit of the Zoning Ordinance. Also included are pending items from previous Planning meetings. The items were reviewed in approximately the order they appear in the Memorandum dated December 22, 2025 by Gregory Ransford (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

proposal. If the change is rejected, the proposed Zoning Ordinance text remains unchanged. **Action Items** are in **Bold** text.

Carryover Item from Previous Meeting(s)

1. Lot vs. Parcel. It was agreed to delete “tract of land” in Section 3.80 and replace it with “Lot”. Planner Ransford is to rewrite the definition of “Lot” to clarify and present for review of the Planning Commission. The clarification should eliminate the need to distinguish between Lot or Parcel in the Zoning Ordinance.

A brief discussion was held regarding the need to Plan and Zone for Mobile Home Parks. Planner Ransford noted that recent legislation eliminated the need for each municipality to plan for every use, relying instead on regional availability of the same use. This needs to be discussed with the Township Attorney.

The subject of Tiny Homes was discussed. It was noted that Ottawa County has made Tiny Home plans available and is encouraging municipalities to permit them in the interest of affordable housing. It was agreed to defer discussion on this topic for a later review of the Zoning Ordinance since it required extensive research.

2. **Section 20.3 – Acceptable but make sure the Township Attorney approves.**
3. Section 4.23 – Acceptable.
4. **Section 4.33 – Revise text to make a licensed architect or licensed engineer responsible to provide a report regarding any hazards and mitigation that might exist resulting from mixed uses.**
5. Section 4.36 -- Accept the current version.

General Audit

1. Section 4.40 – Acceptable.
2. Section 4.43 – Acceptable.
3. **Section 4.44(C)(2) – Reject the recommendation and leave original text unchanged.**
4. Section 4.44(C)(3) – Acceptable.
5. Section 4.44(C)(4) – Acceptable.
6. Section 4.44(C)(6) – Acceptable.
7. Section 4.44(C)(7) – Acceptable.
8. Section 4.44(C)(8) – Acceptable.
9. Section 4.44(D)(7) – Acceptable.
10. Section 4.45(B) -- Acceptable.
11. Section 4.45(C) -- Acceptable.
12. Section 4.45(D) -- Acceptable.
13. Section 4.45(E) -- Acceptable.
14. Section 4.45(F) -- Acceptable.

15. Section 4.45(G) -- Acceptable.
16. Section 4.46(B)(3) -- Acceptable.
- 17. Section 4.46(B)(10) – Accept change from “may” to “shall”. Change “...by any light source other than a continuous indirect white light.” to “by any light source other than a white light that is continuous, internal, and Dark Sky compliant.” or words to that effect.**
18. Section 4.50(D) -- Acceptable.
19. Section 4.51(C)(9) -- Acceptable.
20. Section 4.51(C)(12) -- Acceptable.
21. Section 4.51(E) -- Acceptable.
22. Section 4.51(F)(2) -- Acceptable.
- 23. Section 4.52(A)(1)(b) – Reject change. Leave text as original.**
24. Section 4.52(A)(3) – Acceptable.
25. Section 4.52(A)(8) – Acceptable.
26. Section 4.52(B) – Acceptable.
- 27. Section 4.52(B)(2)(b) – Reject change. Leave text as original.**
28. Section 4.52(B)(4) – Acceptable.
29. Section 4.52(C)(3) – Acceptable.
30. Section 4.52(D)(3) – Acceptable.
31. Section 4.52(D)(5) – Acceptable.
- 32. Section 4.53(A)(3)(a) – It was agreed to make no changes to the existing text.**
- 33. Section 4.53(B)(4) – Change “Accompany” to “Accompanying”.**
34. Section 4.53(E) – Acceptable.
35. Section 4.53(E)(3)(b) – Acceptable.
36. Section 4.53(E)(3)(c) – Acceptable.
37. Section 4.53(G)(2)(b) – Acceptable.
38. Section 4.53(G)(2)(c) – Acceptable.
39. Section 4.55(D)(5)(a) – Acceptable.
40. Section 4.55(E)(1)(b) – Acceptable.
- 41. Chapter 4A – The Planning Commission accepts Planner Ransford’s recommendation to have the Township Attorney review. Planner Ransford will coordinate review with the Township Attorney.**
- 42. Section 4.56 – This item was not on Planner Ransford’s list and was changed previously. It was, however, noted that the previous revision making this Section applicable to all uses requiring Site Plan Review is not correct in that it would require sidewalks and pedestrian accessibility for all Special Uses and other uses where not appropriate. Therefore, Site Plan Review is not the correct criteria to make this Section applicable. The Planning Commission feels Section 4.56 should be applicable to the B-1, B-2, I-1, I-2, LMDOD and LSOD Zoning Districts.**
43. Section 30.2 Footnotes – Acceptable.

44. Tiny homes, container homes, barndominiums, ... -- Barndominiums are currently permitted under the Zoning Ordinance. A discussion was held regarding tiny homes and it was agreed to not address them at the current time.

The Citizen Planner video on Short- Term Rentals was discussed briefly. It was noted the video suggested several items the draft legislation previously prepared by the Planning Commission did not address, including periodic septic inspections, a maximum number of Short- Term Rentals per owner, and making advertising a Short- Term Rental without proper permits a violation. It was not determined if these requirements should be added – it was just noted they were not included.

Old Business – None

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Kathy Kuck and seconded by Lydia Brown to pay salaries for the January 8, 2026 Planning Commission meeting (all members present).
The motion carried unanimously.

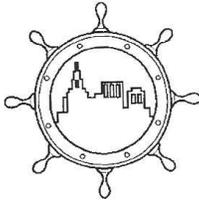
Adjournment

A motion was made by Lydia Brown and seconded by Kathy Kuck to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:03 PM.
The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary
Robinson Township Planning Commission

Attachment:
Memorandum dated December 22, 2025 from contracted Township Planner Gregory Ransford Regarding Zoning Ordinance Rewrite – General Audit.



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MEMORANDUM

To: Robinson Township Planning Commission
From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
Date: December 22, 2025
Re: Zoning Ordinance Rewrite – General Audit

Pursuant to your continued direction regarding the Robinson Township Zoning Ordinance (RTZO) Rewrite project, below are the revisions from your November 13, 2025 meeting. In addition, further below are our recommendations related to the general audit. Coupled with those suggested revisions, we raise several items for your review and direction.

Previous Direction

Prior to outlining our next set of general audit recommendations, below we summarize your most recent direction from the previous meeting.

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

- Parcel or Parcels of Land – contact the Township Legal Counsel regarding the proposed revisions and whether changes are even necessary. In addition, inquire about “tract of land” within Section 3.80.
 - While we inquired with the Township Legal Counsel, we are waiting for his response. Admittedly, we did not contact him until recently due to vacation and certain deadlines.
- Section 20.3 – Prohibit residential uses within Agricultural Planned Unit Developments. (See page identifier Chapter 20 – Page 2)
- Section 4.23 – return “building” in the three instances where it was struck. (See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 17)
- Section 4.33 – revise “may” back to “shall.” (See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 24)

Additionally, inquire with the Ottawa County Department of Environmental Health (OCDEH) if they would be able to support the language as written. In response to us providing them a copy of the language, the OCDEH indicated the following:

- After speaking with my Onsite Supervisor, we concluded that this might be a Site Visit Request for older structures or New Septic/Well Permits for a new construction. If a new house is being built that needs a septic and/or a well, some townships require that the septic and well permits are applied for/received prior to the township releasing a building permit.

We are unsure what Robinson Township means by “any hazards” as it is quite vague. If Robinson Township requires information regarding underground storage tanks, hazardous materials, releases, or other environmental concerns, we recommend visiting the EPA Cleanup website: <https://map22.epa.gov/cimc/MI>

While the changes were minimal, we believe the attached accomplishes your direction.

General Audit

As you know, we are now working through the remainder of the RTZO generally in numerical order to conduct the general audit. That said, for any section or Chapter we have previously reviewed related to the Robinson Township Master Plan provisions, we intend to return to each of those chapters, as necessary, as we work through our collection of audit notes provided by the Township Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission Chairperson, and others throughout this process. Until then, below are our next set of recommended revisions or observations for your consideration with this audit review.

- Section 4.40 – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. That said, we are not experts in vibrations. Given this, if the Planning Commission would like confirmation of the vibration limitations therein, we can contact a professional in that regard. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 27)*
- Section 4.43 – we propose striking “Robinson” to maintain consistency with the additional references of “Township Building Code” and its proposed definition within the RTZO, which you previously reviewed. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 30)*
- Section 4.44(C)(2) – in our experience, this provision can delay filing a citation where the Township expects that a notice would be ignored. That is, because the RTZO requires notice is provided, the Township must first do so prior to issuing a citation. In the instance a citation is issued without sending the required notice, the Court will dismiss the citation. Overall, we have no concerns with this language if it is the desired legislative process for signs in violation of the RTZO but we caution the Township about handcuffing itself with this process. We have not proposed any revisions to the language. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 31)*
- Section 4.44(C)(3) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 31)*
- Section 4.44(C)(4) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 31)*
- Section 4.44(C)(6) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 31 and Page 32)*
- Section 4.44(C)(7) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 33)*
- Section 4.44(C)(8) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 33)*
- Section 4.44(D)(7) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 34)*
- Section 4.45(B) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 37)*
- Section 4.45(C) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 37)*
- Section 4.45(D) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 37)*
- Section 4.45(E) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 37)*
- Section 4.45(F) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 37)*
- Section 4.45(G) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 37)*
- Section 4.46(B)(3) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 38)*

- Section 4.46(B)(10) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 39)*
- Section 4.50(D) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 49)*
- Section 4.51(C)(9) – we believe the proposed change better organizes the subsection. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 52)*
- Section 4.51(C)(12) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 52)*
- Section 4.51(E) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 54)*
- Section 4.51(F){2} – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 54)*
- Section 4.52(A)(1)(b) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 55)*
- Section 4.52(A)(3) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 57)*
- Section 4.52(A)(8) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 57)*
- Section 4.52(B) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 58)*
- Section 4.52(B)(2)(b) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 58)*
- Section 4.52(B)(4) – we believe the proposed change better organizes the subsection. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 58)*
- Section 4.52(C)(3) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 60)*
- Section 4.52(D)(3) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 61)*
- Section 4.52(D)(5) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 61)*
- Section 4.53(A)(3)(a) – this provision prohibits the planting of vegetation within four feet of the lot line. Prior to providing a recommendation to modify this provision, we seek understanding regarding what the Township desires to accomplish. If it is to protect the planting from being cut by the adjacent property owner, we recommend that plantings are positioned with a setback at their expected mature width. It is important to note that in a subsequent subsection, the language requires the mature height and width (spread) of all plantings shown on the plan. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 62)*
- Section 4.53(B)(4) – given that the Township requires a registered landscape architect to create the landscape plan, we recommend slight revision to this section to require a more formal statement of compliance. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 63)*
- Section 4.53(E) Table – while the language prior to the Table indicates a buffer shall be along a lot line, we nonetheless wanted to provide clarity within the Table for the same. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 64)*
- Section 4.53(E)(3)(b) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 64)*
- Section 4.53(F)(3)(c) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 65)*
- Section 4.53(G)(2)(b) – we recommend that parking lots contain both islands and peninsulas rather than allowing one or the other, which is how the language currently reads. If the intent is to break up large

areas of pavement, having only peninsulas would potentially leave a large central area without landscaping (islands) to break up the pavement mass. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 66)*

- Section 4.53(G)(2)(c) – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 66)*
- Section 4.55(D)(5)(a) – the proposed revision structures the subsection in the same manner as the related subsections. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 71)*
- Section 4.55(E)(1)(b) – the proposed revision corrects the reference to the traffic impact study, which is consistent with additional reference therein. *(See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 72)*
- Chapter 4A – Sexually Oriented Businesses – given the sensitive nature of sexually oriented businesses with particular regard to freedom of speech, we would prefer to defer its review and any necessary updates to the Township Legal Counsel, Mr. Ron Bultje. In the instance the Planning Commission agrees, we are prepared to communicate the same to Mr. Bultje. *(Language not included herein).*
- Section 30.2 footnotes – we believe the proposed change is self-explanatory. *(See page identifier Chapter 30 – Page 3)*

Completed Chapters and Remaining Chapters

Given that we have been working through these RTZO revisions for quite some time, we wanted to provide an update regarding “completed” chapters and remaining chapters. Since we began this process, we have completed our review and recommendations of the following Chapters:

- Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, Chapter 7, Chapter 8, Chapter 9, Chapter 10, Chapter 11, Chapter 12, Chapter 13, Chapter 14, Chapter 15, Chapter 16, Chapter 17, Chapter 18, (Chapter 19 does not exist), Chapter 20, Chapter 21, Chapter 22, (Chapters 23 through Chapter 29 do not exist), Chapter 30, and Chapter 31.

The following chapters or portions of chapters remain to be reviewed:

- Chapter 4A (By Legal Counsel), Section 31.7, Section 31.8, Chapter 32, Chapter 33, Chapter 34, Chapter 35, (Chapters 36 through 39 do not exist), Chapter 40, Chapter 41, and Chapter 42.

In addition to the above chapters, we continue to work to incorporate the notes provided by Chairperson Martinie and Commissioner Maschewske, as well as our own notes, as applicable. For the sake of progression through the notes by Chairperson Martinie and Commissioner Maschewske where we do not have specific direction, we seek your direction regarding the following:

- Tiny homes, container homes, barndominiums, etcetera

While we have communities that permit these through various means, we prefer to receive your interests concerning what you seek to achieve prior to drafting language.

The proposed set of Zoning Ordinance Rewrite recommendations has been scheduled for your January 8, 2026 meeting. If you have any questions, please let me know.

GLR
Planner

Attachments