

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
September 10, 2026

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:05 PM. at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present

Shawn Martinie
Bill Maschewske
Phil Crum
Michelle Gillespie
Steve Ambrose
Lydia Brown

Absent

Kathy Kuck

Also present were Zoning Administrator Luke Petsch, Contracted Planner Gregory Ransford and no members of the public. The attendance sheet is not attached as it contained no signatures.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Lydia Brown and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to approve the agenda of the September 10, 2026 meeting as written.
The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Adopting of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve as written the minutes of the August 26, 2026 Planning Commission meeting.
The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Non-Commission Member Inquiries and Questions -- None

Reports and Communications -- None

Announcements -- None

New Business

The purpose of this special meeting was to review changes to the Zoning Ordinance proposed by Gregory 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 in addition to items on the Planning Commissions list and open items from previous Planning meetings. The items were reviewed in approximately the order they appear in the Memorandum dated August 21, 2026 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 Zoning Ordinance text remains unchanged. **Action Items** are in **Bold** text.

Previous Direction

1. Section 11A.5(N) – Accepted.
2. Section 4.18(I) – Accepted.
3. Section 4.28 – Accepted.
4. Section 4.22 – Accepted.
5. Section 9.3(D) – Per the Zoning Administrators attached Memorandum, the text regarding the permitting of an owner- occupied recreational vehicle was moved to Section 9.3(L) and did not require administrative approval. Previous direction was to require administrative approval. A discussion followed and the consensus was to not require administrative approval. The text was therefore approved.
6. Section 15.3(H)(1) – Accepted.
7. **MDOT – There was a discussion regarding the setbacks of ingress/egress in the M-45 Overlay District compared to recent information Planner Ransford finally received from MDOT. It was agreed that the values listed in Section 4.55 would be revised by Planner Ransford to conform with MDOT requirements. Planner Ransford is also to check the perimeter dimensions of the overlay districts now located on the Zoning Map compared to the dimensions in the original Overlay District document.**
8. Fire Suppression – As requested by the Planning Commission, Planner Ransford reported he was told by the Building Inspector that when occupancy of a building exceeds 300 persons, fire suppression is required. Additional investigation revealed that for events similar to wedding venues, the occupancy limit is 100 persons without fire suppression.

Pending Items Now Complete

1. **Tables – It was noted that references to applicable sections of the Zoning Ordinance need to be listed somewhere. It was not decided if these should be in the Zoning Ordinance or in the applications for specific items within the Zoning Ordinance, such as Site Plan Review.**
2. Grammatical and structure-based clean-up – This has been completed.
3. Re-organize or correct number order of sections – This has been completed and checked.
4. Updated Table of Contents – This has been completed and checked.

Final Items for Consideration

1. **Section 6.3(B) – It was agreed to strike “with restrictions for public traffic” since no one could explain why it was there.**
2. **Section 5.2 – It was agreed to strike the previous wording and use the following: “The official Robinson Township Zoning Map is on display at the Robinson Township Office.”**

3. LSOD and LMDOD – The exhibits for these Zoning Chapters (17 and 18) are now included in the Zoning Map. **Planner Ransford is to check the perimeter dimensions for accuracy.**
4. Chapter 33 – Acceptable.
5. Exhibits -- Exhibits A, B, C, D-1, 2, and 3 – It was agreed to add “less than 135 degrees” to the second corner lot in Exhibit B and to delete Figure D-1 since it depicted the required front yard incorrectly. All remaining Figures accepted.
6. Section 10.5 Public Utilities for the MDR District in the Master Plan – Bill Maschewske is to research minutes regarding Planning Commission consensus revisions just prior to the adoption of the Master Plan in 2024 and to find text associated with revisions to the Master Plan in response to input from Mark Sloothaak during the 60-day comment period prior to adoption. Both will be sent to Planner Ransford for incorporation into the draft Zoning Text amendments.

Additional Text Amendment Comments

1. Section 18.2(C) – Planner Ransford noted that the heading should be changed from “Industrial Uses” to Industrial Sub-District”. This makes the heading parallel to Sections 18.2(A) and (B). The consensus of the Planning Commission agreed.
2. Various – The Zoning Ordinance draft text in several places uses the phrase “uses similar as determined by the Planning Commission”. Planner Ransford questioned the legality of this practice, however, it is not realistically possible to imagine and list all permitted uses. The consensus was to have Planner Ransford review the subject phrase with the Township Attorney and report to the Planning Commission.
3. Conflict between Special Use and Site Plan deadlines in the Zoning Ordinance– Chairperson Martinie noted that once a Site Plan and Special Use are approved, the Site Plan requires construction to have begun within 365 days and the Special Use Approval requires the project to be completed within 1 year. It was noted the Township Attorney had stated previously that the Special Use Approval prevails. If the Special Use Approval deadline is not met, a letter should be sent by the applicant to the Township Board for renewal. No action needed.

Old Business -- None

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Shawn Martinie and seconded by Lydia Brown to pay salaries for the September 10, 2026 Planning Commission meeting (six members present, one member absent). The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Any and All Other Business That May Come Before the Board

It was noted the next regular Planning Commission meeting would be Tuesday, September 22, 2026.

Adjournment

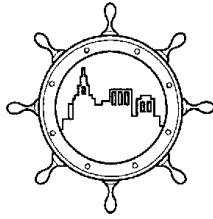
A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Steve Ambrose to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:20 PM.
The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary
Robinson Township Planning Commission

Attachment:

Memorandum from Zoning Administrator Gregory Ransford dated August 21, 2026 regarding Zoning Ordinance Rewrite – Final Revisions and Clean Copy



Fresh Coast Planning

119 1/2 Washington Avenue, Studio B
Grand Haven, MI 49417
www.freshcoastplanning.com

Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
616-638-1240
greg@freshcoastplanning.com

Kevin Yeomans
616-349-0223
kevin@freshcoastplanning.com

Alexis Guiker
616-773-4638
alexis@freshcoastplanning.com

Aaron Bigelow
616-919-2370
aaron@freshcoastplanning.com

Andrea Goodell
616-313-9333
andrea@freshcoastplanning.com

MEMORANDUM

To: Robinson Township Planning Commission
From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
Date: August 21, 2026
Re: Zoning Ordinance Rewrite – Final Revisions and Clean Copy

Pursuant to your continued direction from your August 13, 2026, meeting regarding the Robinson Township Zoning Ordinance (RTZO) Rewrite project, below are the revisions we conducted in the attached draft.

Previous Direction

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

- Section 11A.5(N) – Change “raodway” to “roadway” in two locations (*See page identifier Chapter 11 – Page 4*)
- Section 4.18(I) – Change “Zoning Administrator” to “Planning Commission” (*See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 13*)
- Section 4.28 – Add “and recommendation to the Township Board” after “review” (*See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 20*)
- Section 4.22 – Provide a copy of the previous changes accidentally omitted (*See page identifier Chapter 4 – Page 18*)
- Section 9.3(D) – Revise Recreational Vehicle Parking as an administrative approval and limit their use to only vacant lots (*See page identifier Chapter 9 – Page 1 to Page 3, inserted into deleted 9.2(L) and deleted from 9.3(D)*)
- Section 15.3(H)(1) – Provide clarity to the depth of the landscape buffer and height of a berm (*See page identifier Chapter 15 – Page 3, blue font*)
- MDOT – Reach out to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) again regarding sight distances.
 - In response, the MDOT provided the attached information. Related, Chairperson Martinie asked us to review the current language of the RTZO and how it compares. As you will note within the MDOT materials, they require 495 feet between a street intersection and a commercial driveway on a road of 55 miles per hour. The RTZO, in Section 4.55(D) requires a separation distance of 250 feet between a commercial driveway and a street intersection, but those are also reviewed on a case by case basis. Interestingly, the same section requires a greater separation distance between a commercial driveway to another commercial driveway of 330 feet.

We believe the attached accomplishes your direction.

In addition to the aforementioned, you asked us to inquire with the Township Building Official concerning thresholds within the Building Code requiring fire suppression. In response, Building Official Jacobs indicated that any building of 300 or more persons is required to contain a fire suppression system.

Pending Items Now Completed

As discussed at your August 13, 2026, meeting, we additionally performed the following

- Review the draft for any areas where a table could be used
 - While we noted a handful of areas where a table could be created, the resulting tables would only incorporate a couple of items, which seemed insignificant to convert the text. As a result, we did not create any of those tables. Outside of those areas, we found only one section where a table seemed appropriate; Section 11A.5(F). The use of a table also required the end of the sentence preceding the table to add “in feet, shown in the following table.” *(See page identifier Chapter 11A – Page 2 and Page 3)*
- Grammatical and structure based clean-up
- Reorganized or “corrected” the numerical order of sections, particularly definitions to accommodate alphabetizing the terms. With this, cross reference section numbers and chapter references throughout the ordinance.
- Updated the Table of Contents

As a result of the aforementioned, we created a clean copy of the RTZO, which is also attached.

Final Items for Consideration

During our “clean-up” and review of remaining notes, we have the following for your consideration.

- Section 6.3(B) of the RTZO is a use requiring special approval and reads, “Composting of off-site vegetative matter with restrictions for public traffic.” We contemplate the intent of the phrase “with restrictions for public traffic” to make sure the Planning Commission achieves whatever the intent may be. Further, we find that phrase vague. We recommend it is removed so that the section reads “Composting of off-site vegetative matter” and the Planning Commission can control traffic during its site plan review process.
- Section 5.2 – We will update the date within the final paragraph of this section at the time of the public hearing but recommend removing the language regarding “hand-written” changes. Below is a copy of Section 5.2, in part, for your convenience.

Section 5.2 – Zoning Map

The official Robinson Township Zoning Map shall be the May 6, 1998 version, available at the Township Office, with hand-written changes noted thereon and initialed by an authorized member of the Planning Commission.

- LSOD and LMDOD – As a reminder, we have removed the exhibits at the end of each Overlay chapter since those districts were incorporated into the Zoning Map.
- Chapter 33 – We found an error in the numbering and lettering sequence that we corrected. The entirety of the RTZO uses (A), (1), (a), (i). This Chapter inadvertently has (current RTZO) (A), (1), (i) replacing the (a) with the (i).
- Exhibits – We modernized Exhibits A, B, C1, C2, and C3 found at the end of the RTZO. They are within the clean copy of the draft RTZO for your review.
 - In regard to the Exhibits, all of them are identical to the current language except for Figure D 1 of 3, where we did not include the label of “required side yard” since it is redundant with the

"required side yard width" label adjacent to it. Certainly, if you prefer both labels we can return the removed label.

- Section 10.5 – At your February 13, 2025, meeting, there was a desire to return to this section after you determined whether the Medium Density Residential (MDR) Classification of the Robinson Township Master Plan was intended to require public utilities. As you may recall, there could be a disconnect in the intent between the MDR Classification and Chapter 10 of the RTZO.

Upcoming Meeting

The proposed set of Zoning Ordinance Rewrite recommendations has been scheduled for your September 10, 2026, meeting. If you have any questions, please let me know.

GLR
Planner

Attachments