

Lake Township Planning Commission
Meeting | Public Hearing Minutes
September 17, 2026

The Lake Township Planning Commission held a meeting and public hearing on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 6:30PM at Lake Township Hall – 5153 Scenic Hwy, Honor MI.

6:30PM Meeting called to order by Mark Janeczko. The Pledge of Allegiance recited by all.

Member present: Michelle Erwin, Kyle Orr, Jackie Randall, Carl Lightfoot and Mark Janeczko

Others present: Josh Mills, Zoning Administrator; Mary Pitcher, Supervisor; Andrea Hendrick, Consultant with McKenna; Penny Georgevich, recorder, and approximately 27 residents (sign in list on file).

Motion by Lightfoot to approve agenda for September 17, 2026; supported by Randall.

Motion by Randall to approve minutes from August 13, 2026 PC Meeting; supported by Erwin.

6:46pm Mark Janeczko called to order Public Hearing on the proposed Zoning Ordinance for Lake Township and gave an overview of the process the Planning Commission has followed to develop the proposed Zoning Ordinance.

Georgevich announced posting of Public Notice in Record Patriot on August 20, 2026.

Andrea Hendrick, McKenna consultant, gave overview of some changes made: formatting, environmental rules to protect lakes/rivers, dockages.

Public Comment:

G. Magel – provided suggestions for enhanced Dark Skies provisions; reviewed potential changes to Article 5.3 Exterior Lighting and 5.4 Signs (illuminated); language provided to board. (documents provided)

J. Slater – supplied written comments to Mark and wants included in the record, also comments from Jeremy Jones; supports Dark Skies.

J. Gushow – supports Dark Skies; concerns about Data Centers; continue with native plant requirements. (letter provided)

S. Kincaid – supports the new development setbacks; concerns about ordinance that requires a new building/garage cannot be larger than the current structure, if one can meet all the setbacks and has the property to build, they should be able to build without applying for a variance.

D. Kelly – the role of agriculture should be considered and should encourage more.

J. Gleeson – same concerns as Kincaid; support for work with setbacks; consider unintended consequences of limiting size of garage that can drive people to build bigger houses.

S. Shultz – concerns about Article 3, height restrictions of 29' seems a little low for a new house; Article 4, Lake Protections, does this apply to 1 and 2 family homes?; where is steep slope overlay map?; Section 4.6, Ridgelines, specifies maximum height of 18' is low; Section 4.10, Vegetation Preservation, for cutting, maybe doesn't need both arborist and landscape architect; suggestion for language to be included that Data Centers should pay for all infrastructure improvements. (letter provided)

M. Goodman – doesn't think Accessory Dwelling Units are appropriate for township due to Masterplan Survey showing residents do not want more density; six dockages is too much, maybe 4 is enough; compromises on the ADUs could be to make the primary residence as owner occupied and not short-term rent either or the ADU is not a short-term rental, but a long-term rental, as this could help with housing. (letter provided)

D. Blank – surprised the draft ordinance allows stand alone ADUs, this could cause higher density and put strain on water quality, especially in the lakeshore residential; contradictions in definitions: accessory dwellings may be located in detached accessory structure, but accessory structure says not for dwelling, lodging or sleeping purposes (Section 2.29).

T. Kucera – acknowledged work done by Planning Commission on the draft ordinance; definitions of sketch plan, plot plan and site plan are unclear; example - Section 4 requires elements to appear on sit plan and 4.1.A.1 states that site plans are made optional in sensitive areas; 4.1.2 should mention wetlands and water bodies; slope map should be produced; Inconsistencies in existing ordinance Section 3.18.d paragraph 6 has steep slope as 15% and Section 13.6 paragraph i. defines steep slopes as 12% - and the revision steep slope begins at 18%; concepts of slope zones in Section 13.6.M; Article 3.3 Schedule regulations calculation should be added to footnotes on 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8;

T. Kucera – recognize commission for their hard work; definitions for sketch plan, plot plan and site plan are confusing to what applies where. Section 4.1a1 Site plans are made optional, but feels it should be required for any development in environmentally sensitive areas; Section 4.12 only mentions ridgeline and shoreline areas, should mention wetlands and waterbodies; slope map should be provided; original zoning ordinance lists steep slope as anything over 12%, while new draft lists it as 18%; missing is slope zones; Article 3.3 Schedule of Regulations, footnote about calculating areas should be added to all graphics so it is clear; written notes provided.

M. Ferrins – there are still some gaps and loss of protections from the Crystal Lake overlay that are not in the new document – they were passed out by Tom Kucera; surprise of the increase in lot coverage in R2 districts and added industrial as allowable use.

D. Myler – concern about the 35-foot setback being too much.

M. Sotor – feels 35-foot setback rule is extreme;

D. Houser – believes one dock per lot is adequate, 4 dockages (hoists), should be enough; support for the docks and 10ft setback, dockages reduce to 4.

P. Gaudino – 4 inconsistencies in % impervious surface areas in Article 3 and 4 concerns in wording in Article 4 (letter provided):

Section 3.5. 3.].6, 3.7 % doesn't match images %'s. Article 4 Section 4.2f3 (pg40) – sentence with "acknowledge requirements with the land and are binding...);

4.5f (pg47) Remediation on steep slope, sentence was difficult to understand, replacement was submitted; Section 4.10f1 (pg55) minor tree removal sentence is difficult to understand; Section 4.2 sentence ends in a comma.

T. Klaes – for docks the 10 ft setback measured from land boundaries extended into the water does not work, would like it researched more; 35 ft setback from water is excessive; who will enforce tree cutting; water access lots by one family is not in line with what currently exists.

K. Birchler – there is a table with permitted uses which prohibits any kind of electric storage batteries in a residential zone, but most rooftop solar comes with some type of battery storage.

M. Pitcher – density and congestion on crystal drive is a problem; ADUs are not supported especially not appropriate on the north shore of Crystal Lake, it will just increase pedestrian traffic on already busy roads; 6 dockages, on 100 ft lot, is too many; amendments to definitions has been provided; definition for ridgeline, suggest adding “as shown on topographical maps, Lidar maps or other appropriate slope map.”

K. Neat – concern for ADU along north shore of Crystal Drive.

S. Casey – commendation commission on work done on proposed zoning; in favor of 35-foot setback on lakes.

7:42pm Public Hearing closed

Planning Commission asked questions of McKenna consultant.

Unfinished Business:

Future Land Use Map – McKenna consultant, Andrea Hendricks, spoke about Future Land Use Map being reflective of current zoning map with future land use designations and a necessary part of the Master Plan; also reviewed process for adopting Future Land Use Map.

Announcements – **Next meeting October 8, 6:30pm**, to discuss Public Hearing comments.

Future meeting November 12.

Public comments:

T. Kucera asked how much before 10/8 meeting will amendments be available for public review.

D. Myler asked why septic fields were not looked at.

M. Ferrins commented that some other townships adopted reiterations of the septic language for added protections.

T. Kucera commented that the county maps will not provide any slope maps.

J. Randall shared that Warren Hill is 12%, and can help visualize slopes.

M. Goodman suggested that yard sales be allowed every 60 days, instead of 90 days.

T. Klaes is concern about the 35 ft setback.

8:15pm Meeting adjourned.

Penny Georgevich,
Recording Secretary