

**Van Buren County Planning Commission**  
219 E. Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079  
Telephone (269) 657 8253 Fax (269) 657-0579

**Minutes**  
**May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**6:34 PM**

**1. Call to Order & Attendance**

**Present:** Jan Petersen, Tom Motycka, Tony Hemenway, Barbara Rose, Kurt Doroh, Alyssa Hosbein.

**Absent:** Pam Stermer, Scott Cedarquist, William Pugsley, Ray Martin, Celinda Gilmore.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:** Doroh motioned to approve agenda, Motycka Supported. Motion carried.

**3. Approval of Minutes from April 23, 2023**

**Motion:** Motycka motioned to approve minutes, Doroh supported. Motion carried.

**4. Public Comment**

Tyler Augst from MSUE discussed current options for board member training and offered to help organize a Citizens Planner Course in our area. Tyler also spoke of MSUE's Great Lakes Coastal Planning and Zoning email course.

**5. Reports**

- a. County Commissioner—Doroh reported on selection process for county administrator and continued search to fill GIS position.
- b. Land Preservation Board—Petersen reminded there will be a special meeting and training Thursday, June 22@ 6-8pm at the Van Buren ISD Conference Center in Lawrence.
- c. Local visits  
Decatur Township: Motycka reported on Building Committee and Reed Farm PA 116 application. Columbia Township: Doroh reported on submission for Spark grant. Covert Township: Rose shared information on Solar Energy Ordinance.

**7. Unfinished Business**

- Tyler August covered training opportunities under public comment

**8. New Business**

- a. Coloma Charter Master Plan Review: There were no concerns with adoption procedures or conflicts and inconsistencies with the Van Buren County Master Plan 2025. There were positive comments about the design graphics, charts and maps used to make

the information accessible to readers. Motyka motioned to concur with Coloma Charter Master Plan. Rose supported. Motion carried.

b. Almena Township Rezoning of Parcel: There were discussions about why the conditional zoning would be abandoned and the impact of that change on the compatibility with neighboring land uses. VBCPC members also raised concerns that the change to C-3 without conditions on the parcel appears to deviate from the community vision expressed in the 2017 Almena Township Master Plan's future land use map. Other discussion centered on whether the change to C-3 without conditions would give the community broader discretionary review authority. Some thought more information was needed. Motyka, motioned to concur with the Almena Township rezoning request. Tony Hemenway supported. Four (4) ayes, two (2) opposed. Motion carried.

## **9. Adjournment**

Motyka motioned to adjourn. Hemenway supported. Motion carried 7:48pm

**Next meeting:** Wednesday June 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm

**Minutes by:** Alyssa Hosbein and Jan Petersen