

MINUTES OF THE SPARTA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting of Tuesday, January 13, 2026, 7 PM
Sparta Township Hall, 160 E. Division St., Sparta MI

This meeting could be viewed live or recorded at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu9bOagfR6m02k7rdmX3TLA>.

Present: Chairperson Terry Hartman (9/28), Vice Chairperson Tim Driscoll (9/28), Commissioners Don Doyle (9/27), Dale Flanery (9/27), and Ken Humphreys (9/27)

Also Present: Zoning Administrator/Planner Kevin Yeomans of Fresh Coast Planning, Sparta Township Supervisor Dale Bergman, Sparta Township Board Trustee Bill Goodfellow, and Recording Secretary Toni Potes

Absent: Secretary Linda Anderson (9/28) and Township Board Trustee Barb Johnson (12/28)

I. / II. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance: Chairperson Hartman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Additions or Corrections to Agenda: Motion by Doyle, second by Humphreys, to approve the Agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Minutes of November 11, 2025, Regular Meeting: Motion by Flanery, second by Doyle, to approve the Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Public Comment (for items on the Agenda):

Brook Burg, of 10870 Phelps Rd., is in favor of a moratorium, having the expectation of love your neighbor, wanting quiet and water and power usage, and Sparta not losing its identity. Data centers affect farming and bees.

Julie Sanford, of 370 Nelson, supports a moratorium. She has a masters in environmental science and offered to help. Her concerns were water issues, outrageous noise, and lights would affect night skies. Environmental assessments and impact statements need to be gathered.

Jackie Landon, of 3957 15 Mile, supports a moratorium. She had water and air pollution concerns causing cancer, and lack of economic impact for the locals. Sparta is not a place for data centers.

Greg Rademacher, of 11095 Phelps Ave., stated a data center would impact his boys, the environment, and the noise levels. He questioned if the moratorium is against a data center on that property, and if there is any talk about a financial gain to it being there.

Joan Kenoshneg, of 1065 Indian Lakes, discussed low frequency sound concerns for people and animals.

Morgan Anderson, of 12665 Phelps Ave., also agrees with a moratorium. She asks the Planning Commission to please be transparent.

VI. Business Items

A. Public Hearing—Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations: Zoning Administrator/Planner Yeomans provided an update since the October meeting.

Public Hearing opened at 7:19 PM

Joan Kenoshneg, of 1065 Indian Lakes, questioned a situation of a basement/in-law suite: it is not an accessory building. She questioned Airbnb-use: language is included.

Bill Goodfellow, of 2267 12 Mile Rd., pointed out that rental to the general public is not mentioned in the proposed document. The property owner has to maintain residency. Long-term rental language is not included.

Public Hearing closed at 7:27 PM

Motion by Humphreys, second by Flanery, to table the matter to prepare language that the accessory dwelling unit is not used as a rental. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Data Center Regulations & Moratorium Amendment Review: Zoning Administrator/Planner Yeomans explained that an amendment to the zoning ordinance would give the Township Board authority to issue a moratorium by resolution. Motion by Driscoll, second by Flanery, to proceed to public hearing on a zoning ordinance amendment for a moratorium. Motion carried unanimously. Pending review of the information provided regarding sample regulations for data centers, the topic was tabled.

C. Review of 2026 Schedule: Motion by Driscoll, second by Humphreys, to approve the Planning Commission meeting schedule on the following Tuesdays in 2026: January 13, February 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10, and December 8.

VII. Public Comment (for items on or not on the Agenda):

Jackie Landon, of 3957 15 Mile, offered information from the Michigan EDRA for the Planning Commission's review. The Right Place is helping data centers acquire property, and the Village has a relationship with them. She appreciates the Planning Commission's openness.

Michael Johnson, of 12240 Fruit Ridge, stated a complaint was made on him for his lawn care and snowplowing business being run out of his house. He asked if the Township could look into helping. Zoning Administrator/Planner Yeomans explained that the business is operated from the pole barn, not the house, which is not allowed.

Joan Kenoshneg, of 1065 Indian Lakes, stated data centers are so new, you need 12 months to work it out. Other townships are doing one-year moratoriums. Regarding accessory units, she had concerns about "family" vs. "partner" identification. Agencies will get involved if it can't be a rental unit. Tiny houses are replacing the accessory building, which is more

favorable than adding on to the house. She also stated she's a member of the Sparta Garden Club and desires a community garden; grants are available.

Jason Reister, of 12077 N. Division, asked if the Planning Commission would consider a double-wide on ag land. Zoning Administrator/Planner Yeomans explained the situation of a private road, pending land division, and duplex use by right; he will work on it.

VIII. Staff and Commissioner Comments: Driscoll stated he is not 100% against data centers because he needs to educate himself. But he and all of the Commissioners do what is best for the community. Zoning Administrator/Planner Yeomans addressed the Land Division Act Amendment which has been in process at the state level for about one year. He discussed changes made at the end of 2025 and how the changes apply to Sparta's zoning ordinances. He will bring other updates as they occur. The issue of pole barn businesses, in lieu of home occupation, will be added to the Planning Commission list of items to review.

IX. Adjournment: Motion by Driscoll, second by Humphreys, to adjourn at 8:30 PM. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Sparta Township Planning Commission will be Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 7 PM. Pending are the Master Plan Distribution Comments.

Respectfully submitted,
—Toni Potes
Recording Secretary