

MINUTES OF THE SPARTA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting of Tuesday, August 11, 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);
Secretary Linda Anderson (9/28); Township Board Trustee Barb Johnson (12/28);
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,
Township Supervisor Dale Bergman, and Recording Secretary Toni Potes

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 Driscoll, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Minutes of June 9, 2026, Regular Meeting: Motion by Johnson, second by Humphreys, to approve the Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Public Comment (for items on the agenda): An opening statement by Chairperson Hartman addressed any misinterpretation of the data center regulations item on tonight's Agenda. The moratorium is a proactive step for the Planning Commission to develop regulations and is still working with the Township and other communities to review all aspects. No applications and no inquiries have been received to locate a data center in Sparta. Tonight the Planning Commission is reviewing where it is with proposed regulations.

Brook Burg of 10870 Phelps St., Sparta, suggested the Planning Commission look at regulations of places that do not have data centers.

VI. Business Items

A. Public Hearing: Home-Based Business Regulations Review: Zoning Administrator/-Planner Yeomans provided an overview describing the allowance of small home-based occupations.

Public Hearing opened at 7:08 PM. No public comment.

Public Hearing closed at 7:09 PM.

Motion by Flanery, second by Anderson, to recommend to the Township Board adoption of the home-based business ordinance, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Data Center Regulations Review: The Planning Commission was presented with a lengthy Jamestown ordinance for reference. The ordinance has not been adopted, and legal counsel has not seen it; they are early in the process. Zoning Administrator/-Planner Yeomans provided a few updates from the State level. The moratorium expires in approximately March 2027.

Ricky Johnson of 29 Centennial questioned the location of the aquifers.

Joan Kenoshmeg of 1055 Indian Lakes Road, had concerns about the open meetings act being followed and wanted to see the proposed data center ordinance. She moved to Sparta four years ago. She's concerned that something will be put in behind their backs. She had discussed non-disclosure agreements with a board member; she did not know who it was and may be referring to a Village representative. She stated corruption is real, millionaires get their way, anyone can be bought, and suggested hiring an expert on the matter. Commissioner Driscoll assured her that no formal request to the Village has been made and that he cannot be bought.

C. Mixed Use Residential Commercial—Sparta Avenue Discussion: Township Supervisor Bergman provided background for the topic. The current zoning in some locations, some grandfathered in, causes problems for financing, mortgages and fire insurance. Downzoning to Ag-2 may not be an issue and may be consistent with the Master Plan. R-1 and R-2 would cause issues with the Master Plan. Each rezoning request should be looked at individually. The Planning Commission agreed this needs to be fixed. Zoning Administrator/Planner Yeomans will contact the person who inquired and ask what they are interested in doing. There are less than a dozen properties zoned commercial containing single-family homes.

VII. Public Comment (for items on or not on the Agenda): Ben Brothers of 9886 Kenowa, Sparta, asked for transparency regarding data center discussions. He thanked the Planning Commission for their time.

VIII. Staff and Commissioner Comments: None.

IX. Adjournment: Motion by Johnson, second by Anderson, to adjourn at 7:47 PM. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Sparta Township Planning Commission will be Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 7 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
—Toni Potes
Recording Secretary