

NORWICH TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

WEDNESDAY, April 1, 2026 7pm

7213 North Cypress Ave, Big Rapids, MI 49307

Meeting Minutes Approved

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Angela Barnes

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

Members Present: Angela Barnes, Jill Gregory, Ruth Scott, Ben Avery, Jennifer Kailing, Ezra Scott

Members Absent: Josh Cline

Others Present: None

Call To Order:

- February 4, 2026 meeting minutes: Motion by Ruth Scott to approve the February 4, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Second by Jen Kailing. Motion carried unanimously.
- Zoning Administrators Report: reviewed document with no comments

Unfinished Business:

- Master Plan edits: conducted a detailed review of the Master Plan, focusing on content and wording. It was agreed that formatting and layout issues, including the table of contents, will be addressed at the end of the review process.
- The Purpose section was reviewed and accepted with minor updates. The adoption year was corrected to reflect the current plan. A sentence regarding public input was revised for clarity by removing improper grammar and improving readability.
- The Mission Statement was discussed extensively. Agreed to remove the word "growth" due to ambiguity and differing interpretations. The statement was simplified to better reflect the role of the township in land use planning. The revised direction emphasizes overseeing land use and development while protecting public health, safety, and welfare and preserving the township's rural character.
- The Vision Statement: redundant language was removed, and wording was adjusted to better reflect preservation of natural beauty and community values. Language allowing for responsible and sustainable growth incorporated.
- The Values section was reviewed and determined to be acceptable with no changes.
- The Goals section was reviewed in detail. The road improvement goal was rewritten for clarity to emphasize planning, prioritization, and funding considerations. The goal regarding coordination with neighboring jurisdictions was retained with minimal changes.
- Discussion regarding junk and signage ordinances. Due to limitations in enforcement and past legal issues, the Commission agreed to revise the language to be less enforcement-oriented and more resident-friendly. The revised approach focuses on encouraging well-maintained properties through clearly defined ordinances.
- The cemetery expansion goal was removed
- A goal related to maintaining awareness of current and emerging issues was simplified by removing unnecessary wording while retaining its intent.
- The requirement to review the Master Plan was updated to reflect state law. The plan will be reviewed every five years in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

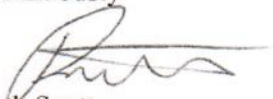
- Renewable energy was discussed; however, it was determined that this topic is already addressed elsewhere in the plan and does not require additional language in the goals section at this time.
- The History section. The Commission agreed to remove the detailed historical narrative from the main body of the Master Plan and relocate it to an appendix. A brief summary paragraph will remain in the main document, with the full historical content preserved for reference. This change is intended to improve usability of the plan and avoid the need for ongoing revisions to historical content.
- Review will continue from pages 13-19 at the next meeting dated for Jun 3, 2026

Public Comment: None

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: Motion by Jill Gregory to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm. Second by Ezra Scott . Motion carried unanimously



Ruth Scott
Planning Commission Secretary

Approved by the Planning Commission on: June 3, 2026