

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

September 3, 2025, 10am EST

Village Hall, Village of Michiana

Attendance:

Commission Members: Mike Botelho (Council Liaison), Kathleen Hogan Morrison, Maureen Shekleton, Julie Bonello (Chair), Ron Rossetto, Karen Syzp

Others: Timothy McCarthy (Council President)

Julie Bonello called the meeting to order. The meeting agenda was reviewed.

1. Approval of Minutes – June 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes approved
2. Document Status and Next Steps – The Master Plan document is under development and is anticipated for final review and approval at a tentative Planning Commission meeting scheduled for October 10th just prior to the Village Council meeting. If the Master Plan is approved for review, the final draft will be distributed to the Village Council on October 10th. If more time is required to finalize a Master Plan draft, a Planning Commission meeting will be scheduled to approve the final draft on November 14th and distributed to the Village Council at the November 14th meeting.
3. Document Approval Process and Timeline– A review of regulatory steps to review and approve the Master Plan was approved. When the Village Council approves the Master Plan for distribution to surrounding communities, there is a 63 day review process. Given regulatory requirements to review the Master Plan, the Master Plan can be submitted for final approval to the Village Council at the March 13, 2026 meeting.
4. Planning Commission Bylaw Approval – The Planning Commission unanimously approved the bylaws.
5. Planning Commission Term Extension –
 - a. Kathleen Hogan Morrison and Maureen Shekleton have both agreed to extend their Planning Commission terms until the Master Plan is approved.
 - b. Julie Bonello has agreed to continue as Planning Commissioner until the Master Plan is approved.

The Planning Commission meeting concluded at 10:55am EST.

Copy of the Planning Commission Bylaws approved by the Planning Commission on September 5, 2025.

PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS

VILLAGE OF MICHIANA PLANNING COMMISSION

ARTICLE 1: AUTHORITY These rules of procedure are adopted by the Village of Michiana Planning Commission (hereinafter referred to as the “Commission”) pursuant to Public Act 33 of 2008 and the Open Meetings Act.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE.

The general purpose of the Village of Michiana Planning Commission shall be to guide and promote the efficient, coordinated development of the Village in a manner which will best promote the health, safety, and general welfare of its people; preserve and protect the Village and its natural resources; and to address the goals and recommendations of the Master Plan.

ARTICLE 3: DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission shall perform the following duties:

(1) **Prepare and Adopt a Master Plan**

- Develop and maintain a *Master Plan* to guide land use, development, infrastructure, and community growth.
- Update the plan at least every 5 years to determine if revisions are needed.
- Ensure the plan promotes public health, safety, and general welfare.

(2) **Provide Zoning and Land Use Recommendations**

- Drafts the zoning ordinance and amendments. Draft, conduct hearings, and recommend a Zoning Ordinance
- Reviews rezoning requests, text amendments, and other zoning changes.
- Provides advisory recommendations to the legislative body.

(3) Prepare an Annual Report to the Village Council.

(4) Review and take action or recommend appropriate actions to the Village on site plan, special land use, and planned unit development requests.

(5) Review Subdivisions proposals and recommend appropriate actions to the Village Council.

(6) Conduct **Public Engagement & Hearings**

- Hold public hearings on the Master Plan, zoning amendments, and other matters.
- Ensure the public has an opportunity to review and comment on planning decisions.

(7) Perform Advisory Role

- Serve as the advisory body to the Village Council on planning and land use issues.
- Make recommendations that balance development with community goals, infrastructure capacity, and environmental protection.
- Prepare special studies and plans, as deemed necessary by the Commission or Village Council, and for which appropriations of funds have been approved by the Village Council, as needed.
- Perform other duties and responsibilities as may be requested by the Village Council.

(8) Attend training sessions, conferences, or meetings as needed to properly fulfill the duties of Commissioner, and for which appropriations of funds have been approved by the Village Council, as needed.

(9) Members of the Commission may conduct such site visits as deemed necessary to evaluate the application and of supporting material. Site visits shall be conducted individually unless otherwise scheduled by the Commission, obeying all requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

(10) Amend the Planning Commission bylaws.

(11) Members of the Planning Commission shall endeavor to provide a fair hearing and a fair hearing process to all Applicants before them in order to meet basic legal due process requirements. Specifically, Commission members should strive to listen to all the evidence in a matter before them and make a decision that they believe is in the best interests of the community after all sides are heard and all evidence is presented. Specifically, Commission members should:

- a. Make sure all attendees are afforded an opportunity to speak and present evidence at a public hearing;
- b. Refrain from taking any actions against an applicant before the Commission which would show favor towards any side on a particular issue;
- c. Refrain from making statements that would have the effect of appearing to show favor or disfavor towards any party prior to hearing all of the evidence presented by an applicant;
- d. Treat all applicants and attendees with basic courtesy and respect;

e. Remember that they are not acting on their own behalf, or for their own individual interests, but on behalf of the Village as a whole.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

Section 4.1 Membership Requirements. Membership of the Commission shall consist of seven (7) members recommended by the Village President and approved by a majority vote of the Village Council. One member of the Commission shall be a member of the Village Council, who shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Commission.

Section 4.2 Terms. Each member shall be appointed to hold office for a three (3) year term, with member terms being staggered so that only up to two (2) terms expire in one year. Vacancies shall be filled by the Village Council under Section 4.1 for any unexpired term.

ARTICLE 5: OFFICERS

Section 5.1 Officers. The officers of the commission are appointed members of the Commission and shall consist of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary.

Section 5.2 Duties of the Chairperson. The chair shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees; and perform such duties as may be delegated by the Commission or Village Council.

Section 5.3 Duties of the Vice-Chairperson. The vice-chairperson shall act in the capacity of the chairperson in his/her absence.

Section 5.4 Duties of the Secretary. The secretary shall serve as the liaison between the Commission and the Village Council, performing the duties hereinafter listed below, and performing such other duties as the Commission may determine.

(1) Minutes. The designated Secretary shall be responsible for a permanent record of the minutes of each meeting and shall have them recorded in suitable permanent records.

(2) Correspondence. The designated Secretary shall be responsible for the issuance of formal written correspondence with other groups or persons. All communications, petitions, reports, resignations, notices of vacancy, or other written materials received by the designated Secretary shall be brought to the attention of the Commission for the appropriate action to be taken.

(3) Attendance. The designated Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining an attendance record for each Commission member and report those records annually to the Commission for inclusion in the Annual Report to the Village Council.

(4) Notices/Agendas. The designated Secretary shall keep the minutes and issue such notices and prepare the agendas for all meetings, as may be required by the Commission. The Chairperson shall prepare meeting agendas.

Section 5.5 Duties of the Village Representative.

The Village representative to the Commission shall report the actions of the Village to the Commission and update the Commission on actions by the Village that relate to the functions and duties of the Commission.

Section 5.6 Duties of the Zoning Council of Appeals Representative. If applicable, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) representative to the Commission shall report the actions of the ZBA to the Commission and update the Commission on actions by the ZBA that relate to the functions and duties of the Commission.

Section 5.7 Elections.

- (1) At the January meeting, or as soon thereafter as practical, the Commission shall select from its membership a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary who shall serve for a twelve month period and who shall be eligible for re-election.
- (2) A candidate receiving a majority vote of the membership present shall be declared elected.
- (3) Newly elected officers will assume their office immediately after the election.

Section 5.8 Terms. All officers shall serve a term of one (1) year, or until their successors are selected and assume office. Officers may be re-elected, with no officer serving for more than four (4) consecutive terms in any office.

Section 5.9 Vacancies. Vacancies in offices shall be filled immediately by regular election procedure with the term expiring in accordance with (3) above.

ARTICLE 6: MEETINGS

Section 6.1 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held at least four (4) times per year in the Village Hall on a date established by the Commission. The dates and times shall be posted at the Village Hall, and a notice should be published in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Any changes in the date or time of the regular meetings shall be posted and noticed in the same manner as originally established. When a regular meeting date falls on or near a legal holiday, the Commission shall select suitable alternate dates in the same month, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Section 6.2 Meeting Notices. All meetings shall be posted at the Village Hall according to the Open Meetings Act. The notice shall include the date, time and place of the meeting.

Section 6.3 Special Meetings. A special meeting may be called by two members of the Commission upon written request to the secretary or by the chairperson. The business which the Commission may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the Commission held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Public Notice of the time, date, and place of the special meeting shall be given in a manner as required by the Open Meetings Act, and

the secretary shall send written notice of a special meeting to Commission members not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Section 6.4. Open Meetings. All meetings of the Commission shall be opened to the public and held in a place available to the general public. All deliberations and decisions of the Commission shall be made at a meeting open to the public. A person shall be permitted to address a hearing of the Commission under the rules established in Section 6.11, and to address the Commission concerning non-hearing matters under the public comment portion of the agenda, as established in Section 6.9 to the extent that they are applicable. A person shall not be excluded from a meeting of the Commission except for breach of the peace, committed at the meeting.

Section 6.5 Public Record. All meetings, minutes, records, documents, correspondence, and other materials of the Commission shall be open to public inspection in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, except as may otherwise be provided by law.

Section 6.6 Minutes. Commission minutes shall be prepared by the secretary of the Commission. The minutes shall contain a brief synopsis of the meeting, complete statement of the conditions or recommendations made on any action; and recording of attendance. All communications, actions, and resolutions shall be attached to the minutes. The official records shall be annually deposited with the Village Council.

Section 6.7 Quorum. In order for the Commission to conduct business or take any official action, a quorum consisting of the majority of the voting members of the Commission shall be present. When a quorum is not present, no official action can be taken, except for closing of the meeting. The members of the Commission may discuss matters of interest, but can take no action until the next regular or special meeting. All public hearings without a quorum shall be scheduled for the next regular or special meeting and no additional public notice is required provided the date, time, and place is announced at the meeting.

Section 6.8 Voting. An affirmative vote of the majority of the Commission members present shall be required for the approval of any requested action or motion placed before the Commission. Voting shall ordinarily be voice vote; provided however that a roll call vote shall be required if requested by any Commission member or directed by the chairperson. All Commission members shall vote on every motion placed on the floor unless there is a conflict of interest, as established in ARTICLE 7. Any member abstaining from a vote shall not participate in the discussion of that item.

Section 6.9 Agenda. A written agenda for all regular meetings shall be prepared as followed. The agenda for all regular meetings shall, at a minimum, include the following:

(1) Call to Order (2) Roll Call (3) Approval of Agenda (4) Approval of Minutes (5) Public Comments and Communications Concerning Items Not on the Agenda(6) Scheduled Public

Hearings (7) Unfinished Business (8) New Business (9) Other Matters or Correspondence to be Reviewed by the Commission (10) Adjournment

Section 6.10 Rules of Order. All meetings of the Commission shall be conducted as closely as possible in accordance with generally accepted parliamentary procedure, as governed by "Robert's Rules of Order."

Section 6.11 Public Hearings. Hearings shall be scheduled and due notice given in accordance with the provisions of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. Public hearings conducted by the Commission shall be run in an orderly and timely fashion. This shall be accomplished by the establishing hearing procedures.

Section 6.12 Notice of Decision. A written notice containing the decision of the Commission will be sent to petitioners and originators of a request.

ARTICLE 7: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Section 7.1 Declaration of Conflict. Commission members shall declare a conflict of interest when any one (1) or more of the following occur: (1) A relative or other family member is involved in any request for which the Commission is asked to make a decision. (2) The Commission member has a business or financial interest in the property involved in the request, or has a business or financial interest in the applicant's company, agency, or association. (3) The Commission member owns or has a financial interest in neighboring property. (4) There is a reasonable appearance of a conflict of interest, as determined by the Commission member declaring such conflict. For purposes of this Section, a neighboring property shall include any property falling within the notification radius for the proposed development, as required by the Zoning Ordinance, or other applicable Ordinance. The Commission shall make a determination regarding the presence of a conflict of interest.

Section 7.2 Requirements. When declaring a conflict, the Commission member shall do all of the following: (1) Announce a conflict of interest and state its general nature. (2) Abstain from any discussion or votes relative to the matter which is the subject of the conflict. (3) Absent himself/herself from the room in which the discussion takes place.

ARTICLE 8: ABSENCES, REMOVALS, AND RESIGNATIONS

Section 8.1 Absences. In order to be excused from a meeting, members of the Commission shall notify the Commission chairperson when they intend to be absent from the meeting. Failure to make this notification at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting shall result in an unexcused absence. Three (3) or more consecutive, unexcused absences or absences at twenty-five (25%) percent of all meetings in any one (1) fiscal year shall be considered nonperformance of duty and cause of removal from the Commission.

Section 8.2 Removal. Members of the Commission may be removed by the Village Council for nonperformance of duty, misconduct in office, or upon failure to declare a conflict of

interest upon vote by the majority, after written charges have been prepared and a hearing conducted.

Section 8.3 Resignation. A member may resign from the Commission by sending a letter of resignation which shall be effective upon a vote of acceptance of the resignation by the Commission. The Commission shall notify the Village Council of the vacancy so that an appointment can be made to fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENTS

These rules may be amended by the Commission by a concurring vote pursuant to subsection 3.10 during any regular meeting, provided that all members have received an advanced copy of the proposed amendments at least 3 days prior to the meeting at which such amendments are to be considered.

Adopted by the Village of Michiana Planning Commission at a regular meeting on _____, 2025.