

Hope Township Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 11, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S. M-43, Hastings, MI 49058. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Members present: Bob Norton, Junior Homister, Larry Heslinga, Drew Chapple.

Members absent: Christine Zuzga, with notice.

**In Zuzga's absence, Homister was selected as the Secretary Pro-tem.

Others Present: Township Planner/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed.

Agenda: Motion by Homister, supported by Heslinga, to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting minutes: Motion by Chapple, supported by Heslinga, to approve the October 14, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

General Public Comment: None.

Zalokar Site Plan Amendment – 7010 S. M-43: Mehmed explained that Joe Zalokar had submitted an application for site plan amendment for a previously approved farm supply store located at 7010 S. M-43 Hwy. Earlier this year, the Township was notified that an additional point of ingress and egress and off-street loading area was under construction that was not originally approved. Section 5.5 of the Zoning Ordinance outlines the process for changes to an approved site plan. A change in the number and location of accesses to public streets and alleys is considered a major change and requires the approval of the Planning Commission in the same manner as the original application. Section 4.1, J addresses amendments to a special exception use permit. Minor non-substantive changes may be made to an existing special exception use with the approval of the Zoning Administrator. Mehmed explained that he has determined that this is a minor non-substantive change to the use, and therefore, a major amendment review of the special exception use before the Planning Commission is not required.

The Planning Commission discussed the site plan review amendment, with a more specific discussion related to the approved driveway permit from the Barry County Road Commission mentioned by Heslinga. Mehmed explained that he measured

the specified distance in the permit to confirm the measurements. The Planning Commission reviewed the standards for site plan review and determined that they were met, subject to the maintenance of previously applied conditions. The Commission specifically noted that they are pleased that there is an improved loading zone so that equipment is not off-loaded in the right-of-way.

Motion by Homister, supported by Heslinga to approve the site plan review amendment for Zalokar's farm supply store business located at 7010 S. M-43 Hwy, subject to the following conditions:

1. All previous conditions shall remain, including that the outdoor display area shall not exceed 10,000 square feet in total.

All ayes. Motion carried.

Master Land Use Discussion: Mehmed presented a draft of the new implementation chapter for review and comment by the Planning Commission. He explained that the current Master Plan does not have a detailed implementation chapter providing steps to implement and maintain the Plan. More specifically, Mehmed noted that the chapter addresses the annual work program, a list of zoning ordinance revisions to explore, additional planning work to consider, ongoing planning education, and master plan maintenance. He also included a matrix that identifies responsibilities and timelines.

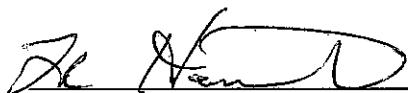
The Commission expressed that they liked the new addition. Mehmed asked if there was anything else that was missing, such as farmland preservation or economic development considerations. The Commission determined that ongoing planning efforts and options should be noted, as well as the minimum meeting requirement. Mehmed noted that he would mention those items. The next step will be to review the completed draft.

Zoning Administrator: Mehmed explained that he has seen a rise in property owners looking to place shipping containers on their properties for storage. He wanted to bring this to the attention of the Planning Commission for input and guidance. More specifically, if this is something that the Planning Commission would like to allow. Homister asked about sizing and what they are considered currently. Mehmed explained that there is a provision that excludes building and structures under 200 square feet, and that the Township has historically applied that standard to containers. The Commission reviewed definitions and the accessory building sections and discussed their applicability. Norton asked about what other

communities are doing. Mehmed explained that it depends. Some are considering them to be an accessory building, some are putting restrictions on them, and others are prohibiting them entirely. The Commission decided that this is something that should be updated since current definitions and standards aren't clear. Mehmed stated that he could bring options to a future meeting.

Mehmed also noted that he would follow up with Don Dekema regarding the horse rescue operation.

Adjournment: Motion by Homister, supported by Heslinga, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



Junior Homister, Secretary Pro Tem

11-20-25

Date