

Bingham Township Planning Commission Annual Report 2020

Each year the Planning Commission reports to the Township Board and to the public on the activities they undertook the previous 12 months. The Commission met nine times over the past year (May 2019-April 2020). A few meetings were canceled throughout the year due to unplanned circumstances such as weather and COVID-19.

Updates to the Zoning Ordinance

Although there were only two updates to the Zoning Ordinance this year, several more were, and are, under discussion.

Adopted: An update to Section 3.11 Outdoor Recreational Uses was an amendment that streamlined the trail uses in the township and now allows for some accessory uses such as parking lots. It was adopted by the Township Board.

Adopted: The Township Board also approved a rezoning request which is a change to the Zoning Map and therefore an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. The request to rezone 8531 E. Bingham Road from the Rural Residential District to the Commercial District was approved and adopted by the Township Board.

Ongoing: The Planning Commission's work on an update to the Rural Residential District language was interrupted by the COVID-19 meeting cancellations. The efforts to review the district language in an attempt to align it with the standards in the Agricultural District should be completed in the coming year. The Planning Commission wants to also update the acreage provisions for livestock and to review residential density in the district.

Public Hearings

In addition to the public hearings for Zoning Ordinance Amendments, three more public hearings were held this past year.

- The year started with an applicant withdrawing their application for a Special Land Use Permit for five residential units on Bingham Road.
- A Special Land Use Permit was granted for a second building at a commercial storage site on Center Highway. Boats and recreational vehicles will now be allowed to be stored indoors at the site in this building.

- A third Special Land Use Permit public hearing is currently underway for allow K&K Farms to hold special events at their site on M-22.

Other Considerations and Ongoing Priorities

- The Planning Commission heard a presentation from the Leelanau County Housing Action Committee regarding their efforts to expand housing opportunities in the county.
- They also received an overview presentation which spoke to the importance of broadband to daily life and the availability of it across the county. This was presented by a member of the Leelanau Internet Futures Team.
- The Planning Commission continues to diligently discuss topics pertinent to the people of Bingham Township. A few of those topics were the future visions and goals of the commercial districts in the township and how to support more residential housing density without sacrificing the quality of life found in Bingham Township.
- A resident brought forward the topic of solar power and hopes to garner support for a Zoning Ordinance amendment which would allow for neighborhood scale solar power facilities.

Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission spent considerable time on planning for an eventual update to the Comprehensive Plan. They reviewed what the update process would entail, a draft scope of work, a review of the current Plan, and drafted a memo to the Township Board with recommended actions. Several members attended a Master Plan workshop sponsored by the County Planning Commission.

Respectfully Submitted by the Members of the Planning Commission:

Chair	Mike Park
Vice Chair	Jeff Layman
Vice Chair	Marie Walker
Secretary	Cathy Jasinski

Members:	Charlie Dashner
	Dennis Grant
	Gary McGhee

Planning & Zoning Staff:

Kathy Egan	Planner, Networks Northwest
Steve Patmore	Zoning Administrator