

**SOLON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday, July 5, 2023**  
**Solon Township Hall**  
**9191 South Kasson Street, Cedar, MI 49621**

I. Call Meeting to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Roll Call / Guest Sign-in

Present: Steve Morgan, Chair; Meg Paxton, Member; Samantha VanderVlucht, Member; and Steve Yoder, Township Board Rep

Excused: Todd Yeomans, Vice Chair/ZBA Rep

Staff Present: Tim Cypher, Zoning Administrator; Allison Hubley-Patterson, Recording Secretary

Members of the public: In total, there were three (3) members of the public present at various times throughout the meeting.

III. Motion to Approve Minutes – June 6, 2023

VanderVlucht noted that her last name was previously spelled incorrectly; Hubley-Patterson will make the change on future agendas and in the minutes.

Chairman Morgan asked for a motion to approve the June 6, 2023 minutes as amended. **PAXTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 6, 2023 MINUTES AS AMENDED; VANDERVLUCHT SECONDED. ALL PRESENT IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

IV. Agenda (additions/subtractions by PC)

Chairman Morgan asked for a motion to approve the June agenda. **YODER MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY AGENDA AS PRESENTED; PAXTON SECONDED. ALL PRESENT IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

V. Correspondence - None

VI. Conflicts of Interest - None

VII. Public Comment (three minutes per person unless extended by Chair) - None

## VIII. Reports

**Township Board Rep:**

Yoder stated that the Public Hearing for the Future Land Use Maps will be held on Thursday, August 10, 2023; he added that he wanted to be certain that the public is aware of what we are doing with the maps.

The fence from the former recycling site will be moved at the end of July or sometime in early August. The Township Board approved the expenditure of \$3,500 for this project.

Yoder reported that four to six buoys will be placed at the mouth of the river on Lake Leelanau. The Leelanau Conservancy agreed to this as there has been pressure for this action to take place from many people in the community. Ray Pleva and others led the charge as people have been concerned that Cedar is getting flooded. The buoys will direct people to come into the river a certain way. There is a great deal of silt accumulating in this area.

The Township will use their ARPA funds for the drainage district that will be put in; this will be the second drainage district for Solon Township. The project will cost approximately \$21,000. There is enough money in the ARPA fund to cover this expense. Cypher stated that a Special Assessment District can be established and the cost would be passed on to all qualified residents in the area.

Yoder stated that there will be a public forum regarding the parks in Cedar on Thursday, July 6, 2023. The Township is required to hold three forums this year.

**ZBA Rep:**

In Yeomans' absence, Cypher reported that there is nothing to report regarding the ZBA.

**ZA:**

Cypher reiterated that the Public Hearing for the Future Land Use Maps will be held on Thursday, August 10, 2023. Cypher asked Yoder if he had any indication from the other Township Board members as to their thoughts on the maps; Yoder replied that he has not heard comments from any other members. Yoder stated that he informed the Board that if they did not do anything regarding the landscape ordinance, he would personally have a difficult time approving the maps. Please refer to Appendix A for Cypher's June Zoning Administrator report.

IX. Public Hearing – None

X. New Business – None

## XI. Unfinished Business

### A. Planning Commission Bylaws – discussion and motion

Cypher discussed Section 6 of the Bylaws—“Conflict of Interest” regarding the term “A relative or other immediate family member...”. He commented that, if a PC member expresses a conflict of interest, the other PC members should vote on the matter. All PC members concurred. Due to the fact that Leelanau County is small, Yoder asked if this might pose a problem as many people are related to one another. Cypher explained that once the PC member discloses the conflict of interest, the other PC members would vote and a decision would be made. Yoder also asked about the perception of a conflict of interest; Cypher stated that perception is everything. VanderVlucht commented that the MTA rules include a statement regarding perception. Cypher explained that perception is in the eyes of the beholder but the PC can be challenged along the way. A matter could end up before the ZBA or even in Circuit Court. Yoder stated that the Bylaws are easy to read, simple to understand and up to date.

Chairman Morgan inquired as to where the PC is protected regarding Cypher in his capacity as the Zoning Administrator. Cypher stated that he is required to declare any conflicts of interest. He must abide by the ethics code for public officials and added that this is spelled out in his contract with the Township.

Paxton noted that there is an excessive use of the terms “he or she” in Section 6 as compared to other sections in the Bylaws. Hubley-Patterson will edit the document based on Paxton’s comments.

Chairman Morgan asked for a motion to approve the Solon Township Planning Commission Bylaws, as amended, pending review and comment from the Solon Township Board. **VANDERVLUCHT MOVED TO APPROVE THE SOLON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS, AS AMENDED, PENDING REVIEW AND COMMENT FROM THE SOLON TOWNSHIP BOARD; PAXTON SECONDED. ALL PRESENT IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

### B. Master Plan Rewrite – continue discussion / review completed work

It was previously discussed that the phrase “community of Cedar” would be used in the Master Plan as opposed to the “village of Cedar”. Page 11 (“History of Solon Township”) of the document refers to an “unincorporated community”; therefore, changes will be made so the correct term is used throughout the Master Plan.

Discussion ensued regarding the communities of Fouch, which is Perrin’s Landing, and Solon, which no longer exists.

Page 14 – “Results were not surprising” will be deleted and replaced with different verbiage.

Cypher requested that all PC members forward their comments to staff so that changes or corrections to the most recent version of the Master Plan can be made. Staff will change to a redline method and all future versions of the Master Plan will have changes noted in red type. To save paper, it was also suggested that future versions of the Master Plan be printed double-sided.

#### C. Landscape Ordinance – continue discussion

Cypher stated that he has a potential conflict with the Township Board due to the fact that the PC spent many hours over the past two years working on the landscape ordinance. He informed the PC that staff can send out what they already worked on and this can be discussed at the August meeting.

Cypher added that legal counsel weighed in on the matter of the waivers and he stated that the PC had covered all of their bases with the landscape ordinance that was written. The waivers would have taken care of many issues that arose.

Paxton stated that there must be a happy medium between the two extreme versions of the landscape ordinance. She added that the PC could cut down what is not needed in the longer version of the landscape ordinance but noted that this is insulting to the many hours of work that the PC spent on this project; Cypher concurred.

VanderVlucht commented that the PC spent many hours putting the maps together but this is dangerous because the landscape ordinance is insufficient. She stated that this is not just about the work that the PC did on this project; it is also about the growth of the Township. She believes that we need the higher standards that were outlined in the lengthier version of the landscape ordinance.

Yoder stated that with the much shorter version of the landscape ordinance that lacks specificity, this is what Chums Corner looks like. He added that the newer version of the landscape ordinance was the PC's attempt at preventing this from happening. VanderVlucht stated that the PC was attempting to ask businesses to present a good plan as to how they would handle their landscaping.

Paxton inquired if the PC could make a presentation to the Township Board. Cypher stated that he attempted to do this previously but his presentation fell on deaf ears. VanderVlucht believes the Board needs to see a visual presentation that shows what could happen as the result of a very loose landscape ordinance. Cypher and Yoder both commented that a presentation would not be a game changer. Yoder added that the Township Board stated the landscape ordinance was too strict but they did not offer any solutions. VanderVlucht asked if the Township Board knows that there may eventually be a hotel in Solon Township.

Paxton suggested that each PC member select three to five items that could be omitted from the lengthier version of the landscape ordinance. Cypher reiterated that he will email the landscape ordinance to all PC members for further review

and the PC can try to simplify the ordinance. He also mentioned that he asked the Township Board members in an email message what would be the harm in passing the landscape ordinance that the PC drafted. Cypher shared that landscape architects have telephoned him and stated that they are very surprised with the minimal requirements outlined in the landscape ordinance.

Chairman Morgan asked the PC members if they want to leave the landscape ordinance as is. Yoder stated that this would not be a good idea as there will not be consensus among the Board members. He added that it would be helpful if Chairman Morgan and some or all of the PC members attended the next Township Board meeting to discuss this topic. Chairman Morgan asked if the PC could request that the Board not approve the Future Land Use Maps until the landscape ordinance has been resolved. Cypher stated that the maps are very important to four current projects so those must be addressed.

Cypher asked Yoder if the Township Board voted on the landscape ordinance. Yoder replied that there was no official vote; the Board simply stated that they were not going to vote on the matter. Cypher stated that the Board will understand the public's position if the room is packed at the next meeting and letters are sent to Board members. Discussion ensued that members of the public could be encouraged to attend the August 10<sup>th</sup> Township Board Meeting and could make their statements during the Public Comment portion of the meeting. Cypher stated that the message urging the public to attend needs to get out via social media, citizens' groups, etc. If PC members speak at the August 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, they should preface their comments by stating that they are taxpayers in the Township and are not attending as a member of the Planning Commission.

XII. Other Items – None

XIII. ZA / Planning Commission Comment - None

XIV. Public Comment - None

Mr. Charlie Smith stated that he recalls attending a Board meeting where it was stated that the Board does not want waivers. He added that a very large and intricate document will drive homeowners crazy. If the Board does not want waivers but they want certain protections in place, he is not sure how the PC will get there.

XV. Adjournment

There being no objection, Chairman Morgan adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 1, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Solon Township Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Hubley-Patterson, Recording Secretary

**APPENDIX A: SOLON TOWNSHIP ZA'S MONTHLY PERMIT SUMMARY  
(JUNE)**

**SOLON TOWNSHIP ZA'S MONTHLY PERMIT SUMMARY**

PERIOD: JUNE 2023

DATE	PERMIT #	NAME	USE	RECEIPT CK.#	AMOUNT
6/11/2023 010-034-006-10	LUP 23-20 5765 E. TRAVERSE HWY. FARM STAND	VANDERLUCHT	LAND USE	202320 205790792 24 S.F.	\$ 40.00
6/12/2023 010-004-014-00	LUP 23-21 8813 & 8895 S. LAKE SHC DRIVEWAY ACCESS & PARKING LOT	MOMBER & CONSERV	LAND USE	202321 124876	\$ 250.00
6/30/2023 010-019-010-50	LUP 23-22 2825 E. KASSON ROAD	BUNTING	LAND USE	202322 131 4,816 S.F.	\$ 165.00
6/30/2023 010-019-007-17	LUP 23-23 11828 S. HILL ROAD	HALL	LAND USE	202323 250 NEW DWELLING - ATTACHED ACCESSORY BUILDING 2,507 S.F.	\$ 125.00

**TOTAL \$ 580.00**

SIGNED: *Timothy A. Cypher*

DATE: 7/9/2023

TIMOTHY A. CYPHER  
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