

Helena Township Planning Commission Public Hearing Minutes
Thursday, June 19, 2025 @ 5:00pm
8751 Helena Road, Alden, Michigan 49612

Call to Order: Chair Jim Gurr called the meeting to order at 5pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: All in room participated.

Roll Call: Present – J. Gurr, D. Hunstad, M. Robinson, G. Schafer, J. Schilling, F. VandenBerg and D. Whipple.

Township Officials Present: Butch Peeples and Bob Logee.

Approval of Agenda: F. VandenBerg motioned to approve agenda, seconded by D. Hunstad. Motion approved.

Statement of Conflict of Interest: No conflicts.

Communications: None

Public Hearing/Comments:

1. Dusty Kiel expressed concern about the potential number of boats permitted as a worst case scenario.
2. Paul Covert shared his support for the ordinance language.
3. Laura Wilcox advised she is not concerned with the number of boats; but does not understand how this ordinance will enhance the township.
4. Mark Moody indicated he is supportive of the ordinance as written.
5. Trish Narwold indicated she is opposed to the ordinance language as potential canopies may impact property owners' view of the water, and no setbacks are included in the ordinance.
6. Kathleen Volle expressed the lake will never be like it was over sixty years ago. Kathleen does not like the newer black canopies that cover the boats on hoists that go down to the dock.
7. Laury Stone expressed support for the ordinance as it is a good compromise and it prohibits marinas and funneling. Laury commended the Helena Township Planning Commission on the efforts related to this ordinance.
8. Gary Mayes disagrees with the Helena Township Planning Commission processes. Website is down.
9. Lori Woodland-Mayes wanted to know how each Helena Township Planning Commission member decision was made for the ordinance language. Ms. Woodland-Mayes also inquired about how this will look over the next ten (10) years in our community.
 - a. J. Schilling indicated that this ordinance was a compromise of very diverse opinions.
10. Lori Sak read a letter from another resident unable to attend. Ms. Sak feels there is overall too much development, excessive population and would prefer to keep the existing Helena Township footprint.
11. Michael McCracken expressed agreement with the written ordinance. Mr. McCracken agrees that change is hard, the compromise is fair, and good things are in the future. Mr. McCracken thanked the Helena Township Planning Commission for the fairness of the ordinance written.
12. Dan Roketenetz shared his concern with potential funneling and grandfathering of five identified properties and enforcement.
13. Diane Roketenetz prefers the ordinance previous to 2012 which permitted two (2) boats, and is concerned about number of boats on holidays. Make compromises valuing all individuals.

14. Paul Sak feels the Helena Township was in violation of the zoning enabling act and open meetings act, and not following his interpretation of the requirement. Suggested threat of lawsuit. No additional public comments, public hearing portion of meeting is closed.

New Business:

- Motion by F. VandenBerg to close the public hearing meeting, seconded by M. Robinson. Motion approved.
- Approval of Ordinance language and associated definitions is motioned by F. VandenBerg and seconded by D. Whipple. Motion approved.
- Motion by F. VandenBerg to prepare documents for (1) Antrim County Planning Commission, and with county suggestions, (2) Helena Township Board, seconded by D. Whipple. Motion approved.

Old Business: None

Adjourn:

- J. Schilling motioned to adjourn; motion approved. Public Hearing adjourned at 6:46pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Fay M. VandenBerg, Helena Township Planning Commission Secretary

Attachment:

CHAPTER 5: SUPPLEMENTAL REGULATIONS

SECTION 5.02: SUPPLEMENTAL WATERFRONT, LAKE, STREAM, FLOOD PLAIN, AND WETLANDS REGULATIONS

Section 5.02.02 – Restrictions Applicable to Property Abutting Lakes, Rivers or Streams