Village of Northport Planning Commission

116 W Nagonaba Street

Northport, MI 49670

Re: Proposed Zoning Map Amendment – D-1 to CN-1 (Parcel affecting Northport Boat Yard)

Planning Commission Members,

I am writing regarding the proposed zoning map amendment scheduled for public hearing on March 11.

The amendment area includes a parcel owned by Northport Boat Yard that has long been reserved for future operational expansion. This property has been maintained specifically to support additional marine service and storage capacity as the business grows.

Based on the materials provided by the Village, a portion of this property would be rezoned from D-1 Multi-Use to CN-1 Conservation/Recreation. As proposed, this change would materially limit development flexibility on that parcel and directly affect long-term operational planning for the boatyard.

Northport Boat Yard is among the larger employers and taxpayers within the Village. Our continued ability to grow operations locally provides direct economic benefit to the community through jobs, local spending, and long-term tax revenue.

Additionally, recent public discussion regarding marina capacity in Northport has highlighted the significant demand for boating infrastructure in the area. Village representatives have noted that marina slip availability is extremely limited and that the Village is exploring the feasibility of a potential marina expansion in the future.

Any increase in marina capacity will naturally create additional demand for supporting marine services, including vessel storage, maintenance, and related facilities. Restricting the development potential of land currently reserved for marine service and storage uses appears inconsistent with those broader discussions about expanding boating access and infrastructure within the community.

Given the significance of this parcel to future business operations, we are struggling to understand the planning or economic rationale behind the proposed change. To date, we have not been able to identify a clear planning objective or public benefit that would justify restricting the future use of land that has been held specifically for business expansion.

In addition to its operational importance, the development potential of this parcel represents a meaningful component of the long-term value of the business. Limiting the permitted use of this property could have significant implications for both future growth and the long-term valuation of the company.

Before any amendment affecting this property is adopted, we respectfully request clarification from the Village regarding:

• The planning rationale for the proposed rezoning

• How this change aligns with the Village Master Plan and long-term economic development goals

• Why this parcel was included in the amendment area

We also believe it is important that any zoning change affecting privately held land with established development potential be supported by clear planning findings and a well-documented public benefit. Amendments that materially restrict the future use of property should be carefully evaluated to ensure they are consistent with the Village's Master Plan and long-term economic development objectives.

Northport Boat Yard remains committed to operating and growing within the Village of Northport, and we believe continued collaboration between the Village and local employers is important to maintaining a healthy local economy.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment and would welcome the chance to discuss this further with the Planning Commission before any action affecting this property is taken.

Sincerely,

Dylan Stephens

Northport Boat Yard

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