Village Of

PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

JULY 15, 2026

MINUTES

Northport

1. Call to Order, Roll Call

Chair J. Gale called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Commissioners present: J. Gale, B. Newell, H. Scott, and J. Woomer
Absent: L. Cavendish, M. McMillan
Staff present: J. Ottenwess, Zoning Administrator
Public Present: A. Thomas, G. Thomas, J. Wilcox, A. Harper (via Zoom)

2. Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved by consent

3. Public Hearing – Class B Nonconforming Status Designation at 1001 N. Mill Street

- Resolution 2026-8

Chair Gale opened the public hearing at 6:01 PM. The Zoning Administrator provided background information about the Class B Nonconforming Status designation application and presented his findings. Chair Gale solicited public comments. J. Wilcox asked when the Village changed the D-1 district and Chair Gale and the Zoning Administrator explained recent background information. A. Thomas submitted written correspondence to the Planning Commission expressing his objections to eliminating single-family residential uses in the D-1 and also explained his plans for the subject property. J. Wilcox also stated his support for the Class B designation Chair Gale closed the public hearing at 6:06 PM.

Motion by B. Newell, seconded by H. Scott to approve Resolution 2026-8 as presented. Roll call vote was taken: Gale, Newell, Scott, and Woomer voted in favor with none opposing and two absent. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of June 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion by J. Woomer, seconded by H. Scott to approve minutes as presented, passed unanimously.

5. Correspondence

A. Thomas submitted written correspondence as part of the Class B public hearing.

6. Public comment

None

7. Reports

a. Zoning Administrator Report

J. Ottenwess referenced his written Zoning Administrator report that was included in the agenda packet.

b. Trustee Report

Trustee Cavendish was absent, no report presented. The Zoning Administrator provided an update on two Village projects that are upcoming and described a light agenda for the Village Council currently.

c. Tree Committee Report

Chair Gale reported that the Tree Committee, originally formed as an ad hoc advisory committee of the Planning Commission, is proposing to transition into a Tree and Village Beautification Advisory Committee. B. Newell explained that proceeds from the Committee's long-running bottle and can collection program have grown to approximately $30,000, allowing the Committee to shift its focus from fundraising toward tree planting and village beautification projects while establishing more formal financial controls. The Committee also intends to develop a village tree replacement plan and return to the Planning Commission and Village Council later in the year with recommendations regarding the committee's formal structure and authority. The Committee further reported that the bottle and can collection program will be scaled back at the end of the year, with the existing fund expected to provide ongoing support for beautification activities through investment earnings and passive collection efforts.

d. Leelanau County General Plan

Chair Gale reported that the County cancelled their June meeting and the July meeting is upcoming, nothing new to report.

8. Discussion Items

a. Rezoning – R-2 S Shoreline Residential District

The Zoning Administrator reviewed revisions to the draft R-2 S Shoreline Residential District regulations made in response to prior Planning Commission direction, including revisions to the reduced waterfront setback option, grading standards, and stormwater management language. Commissioners discussed whether the draft was sufficiently refined to proceed to a public hearing, noting that additional public input from seasonal and waterfront property owners would be beneficial before finalizing the ordinance. Discussion also included clarification of pervious versus impervious surface materials, the appropriate level of administrative discretion in interpreting the ordinance, and whether similar shoreline protection standards should eventually be considered for other waterfront zoning districts to ensure consistency throughout the Village. Commissioners expressed general support for proceeding with a public hearing while recognizing that additional revisions could be made following public comment. No formal action was taken.

b. Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Regulations

The Zoning Administrator presented proposed amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulations intended to simplify the ordinance, eliminate conflicting provisions, and permit ADUs by right in all residential zoning districts through administrative review rather than the special use permit process. Commissioners discussed the proposed definition of an ADU, including whether references to "permanent" food preparation facilities should be removed to avoid creating unintended loopholes, and agreed that the definition should focus on independent living facilities rather than specific appliances. Additional discussion addressed height standards, occupancy requirements, parking, and the relationship between the proposed standards and applicable building code requirements. Commissioners expressed general support for the proposed direction and provided staff with comments for incorporation into a revised draft prior to future consideration.

c. Public Participation Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed the revised Public Participation Plan and discussed whether additional revisions were warranted. Commissioners noted that moving stakeholder lists to appendices had improved the organization of the document, while acknowledging that the plan remained more comprehensive than may be necessary for the Village. The Commission discussed forwarding the plan to the Village Council with the understanding that it is intended to be a living document subject to annual review and future revisions as experience is gained. Commissioners expressed general agreement that the plan was sufficiently developed to move forward rather than continue delaying action and directed the Zoning Administrator to forward the Plan to Village Council.

d. Planning Commission By-Laws

The Planning Commission reviewed possible revisions to its By-Laws, including updates intended to reflect current practices and recent changes to Commission membership and procedures. Commissioners discussed provisions addressing committee appointments, conflicts of interest, and other administrative clarifications to improve consistency with and the Commission's current operations. The Commission generally supported the proposed revisions, with staff directed to incorporate the comments received into a revised draft for future consideration. No formal action was taken.

e. August Meeting Schedule

The Planning Commission discussed the August meeting schedule in light of the Village Manager's planned absence during the regular August 12 meeting. Commissioners considered cancelling the regular meeting and instead holding a special meeting devoted to a public hearing on the proposed R-2 S Shoreline Residential District amendments. Discussion focused on providing an informal open-house style format with display materials to encourage public participation, selecting an appropriate venue capable of accommodating anticipated attendance, and the timing of required notices and mailings. Commissioners generally agreed that an early August meeting, preferably August 5, would maximize public participation while allowing sufficient time to provide notice and prepare meeting materials. No formal action was taken.

9. Public Comment

None

10. **Board Member Comment**

None

11. **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Commission the meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 7:56 pm.

Prepared by: Jered Ottenwess, Zoning Administrator