Advocacy Letter to the Village Planning Commission

Support for Attainable Housing on 7th Street, Northport, Michigan

January 29, 2026

Village Planning Commission

Northport, Michigan

Dear Commission Members,

I am writing to you as a small business owner deeply invested in the future of Northport. My team and I work hard year-round to serve our community, but the reality is clear: the high cost of housing in Leelanau County has made it nearly impossible for working-class residents to afford a place to live. This letter is a heartfelt request for your support of attainable housing development on the lot on 7th Street.

Personal Experience: The Value of Attainable Housing

In 2012, my family and I were able to benefit from attainable housing in this very area. That opportunity was not just a roof over our heads—it was a lifeline. Because we could afford a stable place to live, we were able to purchase and continue operating our family business. Attainable housing was truly a hand up, not a hand out. It empowered us to contribute to Northport's economy and to serve our neighbors, rather than struggling merely to make ends meet.

Current Housing Challenges in Leelanau County

Today, the situation is even more urgent. Market prices for homes and rentals have soared, and the working class—the backbone of local businesses—have been almost entirely priced out. My employees, who are the heart of our business, cannot find year-round attainable housing, and I fear for the sustainability of our business and others like it. Without secure housing, we risk losing talented, dedicated people who want to call Northport home.

Employee Needs and Community Responsibility

Year-round attainable housing is essential for my employees and for the community at large. It allows us to retain staff, provide consistent service, and foster a stronger, more

resilient local economy. Attainable housing is not charity—it is an investment in Northport's future. By supporting development on 7th Street, you are giving hard-working individuals and families the chance to thrive here, just as my family did years ago.

Call to Action

I know the Planning Commission is aware of the housing needs in our village. Now is the time for meaningful action. I urge you to prioritize attainable housing on the 7th Street lot and to champion policies that ensure our community remains a place where people who work here can also live here. This is our collective responsibility, and I am confident that with your leadership, we can make real progress.

Thank you for considering this request. I am hopeful you will take the steps needed to support attainable housing and help sustain the vibrant, inclusive community that makes Northport so special.

Sincerely,

Kristi Fischer

Owner, Fischer's Happy Hour Tavern

Northport, Michigan