

Arvon Township Planning Commission Quarterly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 23, 2026 at 6 PM

Call to Order: 6:00 PM

Roll Call:

- | | |
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| ✓ Nancy Strohschein (Chair) | ✓ Donna Preston |
| ✓ Bob Janda (Township Board Rep) | ✓ John Salisbury |
| ✓ Jay Loman (Zoning Board of Appeals Chair) | |

Recognition of visitors:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| • Jay Fish | • Pat Janik |
| • Bette Gabe | • Whitey Soli |
| • Jim Janik | |

Pledge of Allegiance: Done

Comments on agenda: None

Approval of agenda: Motion: Bob, Second: John, All: yes. Agenda approved.

Approval of minutes from April 2026 meeting: Corrections made:

- Date of the previous meeting minutes approved changed from January 2025 to January 2026
- Time of adjournment changed from 8:40 PM to 7:40 PM
- Motion: Donna, Second: Jay, All: yes. Minutes from the April 2026 meeting approved with changes as noted

Public comments:

- Data Centers: Bette Gabe asked if we have anything in our Zoning Ordinance (ZO) about data centers. Nancy responded that we do not. Jay Fish (Township Supervisor) requests that we look into this to protect our community. Nancy asked Jay for direction from the board on how much effort to put into this topic during the current cycle of ZO updates. The Planning Commission will take direction from the board on if we should delay the completion of the changes being done now to incorporate a thoughtful study on data centers.

Chairman Comments:

1. Reminder to PC members and public that this is a meeting to conduct business as a board
2. Notes from recent Board Meetings. Nancy reviewed relevant topics from the July board meeting.
3. Jim Fedie will begin notifying me when a land split request is received
4. PC Member terms. Note how many terms expire next year.
 - a. Bob Janda – per term on township board
 - b. Jay Loman – 10/2024, 3 years, expires 10/2027
 - c. Donna Preston – 10/03/2025, 3 years, expires 10/03/2028
 - d. John Salisbury – October 2024, 3 years, expires 10/2027
 - e. Nancy Strohschein – August 2024, 3 years, expires 8/2027

Old Business:

1. Planning commission comments/concerns - None
2. Bob Janda: Report from Township Board Rep – Nothing to report
3. Jay Loman: Report from Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) – Jay Loman has not heard anything from the owners of the Finn's about their desire to expand toward Skanee Rd. Nor has he contacted them to see if their ZBA request is still necessary. Jay will contact the Marcottes and get their permission to cancel the request or direction that they still want to proceed.
4. Buddy Sweeney: Report from Zoning Administrator – There have been a total of 10 zoning applications submitted in 2026. Some of these are relevant to the changes we are making in the ZO update.

New Business:

1. Addition of geodesic dome as allowed use in all districts. Nancy suggested that since we approved the geodesic dome for 2 parcels on Liimatainen Rd in 2025, that we need to move geodesic dome into the section of approved uses in all districts for single family homes. The PC members believe we approved this for only the parcels requested in the special use hearing. Most PC members do not believe we should make geodesic dome an allowed structure type. Each PC member will do research on this and the topic will be discussed further.
2. Edit to Zoning Ordinance for use of campers as living quarters as suggested by Buddy Sweeney (Zoning Administrator). This would become Change 9. The PC considered this type of wording along with the freedom to use your property as you want. If there are public health concerns, they need to be addressed by the Western UP Health Department (WUPHD). We will not plan to add this to the current ZO update as it needs more research.
3. Discussion on yurt vs tent and how to interpret ordinance for yurt request. – Since yurts are on a platform, not considered moveable, and are intended for year-round use, the PC believes a yurt should comply with the same setbacks as a geodesic dome. They will need to comply with all building codes, including snow load.
4. Edits to Zoning Ordinance made at April meeting. These changes were not reviewed again except as noted for Changes 5 and 7
 - Change 1: Use of campers on property for occasional use
 - Change 2: Minimum acreage for Forest Resource. Should be 10, not 40
 - Change 3: Amend section 404 with definition of "high-water mark"
 - Change 4: Page 38 "Section 602" typo
 - Change 5: Edit water setback regulations, in conjunction with high-water mark.
 - Buddy asked if these setbacks should be in the General Residential (GR) district since there is no waterfront in that district. The PC decided that we should remove this section from the GR district.
 - There was discussion on if the clarified setbacks would apply to rivers as well as lake shore. Since the definitions of high-water mark include reference to both great lakes and bodies that feed them, we will leave this section in all districts that have river frontage as well.
 - Change 6: Revise section on fences, to include comments from Buddy Sweeney on height and placement.
 - Change 7: Remove section on Short Term Rentals, as requested by the Township Board after review by township attorney. Nancy took the PC and community members through her research on the current bills in the State of Michigan legislature, input from Michigan

Townships Association (MTA) and what nearby townships are doing. Based on this review, all 5 PC members believe we need to have a section in the ZO that balances freedom to use property as the owner desires with protections for the community. Jay Fish committed to having the topic on the agenda for the August 3 meeting, where a decision will be made by the board on how to proceed. Nancy will prepare a research document for the board to review prior to the meeting.

- Change 8: Revise/Strengthen section on civil infractions after consultation with township attorney
- 5. Choose date for special meeting to finalize ZO changes after August 3 board meeting. There will be a special Planning Commission work session on Thursday, August 13 at 6 PM. The main topics will be Short-Term Rentals and Data Centers.
- 6. Determine schedule for final approval of ZO changes – The schedule prior to this meeting had us finalizing changes and having them approved by the board in Fall 2026. This schedule will be updated based on the outcomes of the August meetings.

Topics for Next Meeting:

1. Dependent on schedule for ZO update. We would like to have the Planning Commission approve the ZO changes at the October meeting and pass them to the board for approval. This may change based on outcomes of the August board and PC meetings.

Upcoming meetings:

- August 13, 2026
- October 22, 2026

Adjourn: 7:55 PM