

Elk Rapids Township Special Planning Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – July 14th, 2025 – Approved

The meeting of the Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Zach Amos at 11:35 AM at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street, Elk Rapids, MI 49629.

Roll Call/Present: Zach Amos, James Lundy, Emile Sabty, Shen Smith, Tom Crandall, Gary Pepler, and Matt Soper.

(Quorum Established)

Absent: N/A

Also Present: Larry Nix, Zoning Administrator/ Planner,
Creston Scheel, Assistant Zoning Administrator/Planner,
Thad Morgan, Township Attorney

Audience: Mark Poniatoski, Bill Derman, plus 2 other residents

Approval of Agenda:

Vice Chair Smith motioned to amended section F on the agenda to say *Continuation of Public Hearing*, instead of *Public Hearing*, seconded by E. Sabty

Motion to Approve Agenda As Amended.

Motion: Smith/Lundy

All in Favor- Motion Carried

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to Approve the March 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Sabty/ Lundy

Motion Carried.

Public Comments: No public comments were made at this time

Motion to Open Continuation of Public Hearing:

Motion: Lundy/ Soper

Motion Carried.

Continuation of Public Hearing – Property rezoning from R-2 Residential to PD Planned Development requested by Mark Poniatoski owner of said property at 11882 S. US-31 Tax ID #05-06-032-014-00.

Chair Amos asked if the 9 points from the March 10th meeting were to be addressed at this meeting. Mr. Poniatoski stated he is following the application and has no further comments.

No comments from the public.

Vice Chair Smith questioned Larry and Creston about the paperwork stating that it was not written anywhere about an 8-foot fence around the berm. Chair Amos stated there is no longer a berm. E. Sabty verified that the fence was gone, Mr. Poniatoski responded that in the application, the fence has been removed except around the hydrangeas. Chair Amos reiterated that the berm was being removed (as required by Consumers) and asked if there is any possibility to bury the wire in the ground and if anything in writing from Consumers has been received; Mr. Poniatoski stated he did have something in writing and it was all within the application and Larry's memo.

Motion to Closed the Continuation of the Public Hearing: Sabty/ Lundy

All in Favor- Motion Carried.

Motion to Approve Mr. Poniatoski's Rezoning Request with Conditions:

Motion: Sabty/Lundy

I move to approve the Townline Storage Project to be located at the northwest corner of US-31 and Townline Road 9.7-acred west on Tax Parcel 05-06-032-014-00 with a common address of 11882 S US-31 as represented in the rezoning request and Planned Development Site Plan filed, an amended from time to time, by Mark Poniatoski and his engineer for the development of storage buildings on the 9.7 acre site based on the following reasons and conditions:

1. The proposed use is stated in the application to be more appropriate adjacent to US-31 due to noise and commercial uses. The application also states there is a need for more storage facilities in the area.
2. The general character of the surrounding is a mixture of vacant land, agricultural use, residential uses, and commercial uses. The proposed use will also provide a water and wastewater system to support the proposed use.
3. This parcel is one of just a few that constitute the entrance to the southern end of Elk Rapids Township. The proposed use of storage is basically neutral from an impact prospective but does provide visual challenges as the Township southern entry. This challenge is being met with proposed landscaping to soften the impact of storage buildings parallel to US-31.

Conditions include:

1. Any changes to the approved site plan can be considered by the Zoning Administrator or if determined appropriate, referred to the Planning Commission and Township Board for amending the approved PD Plan.
2. Each development phase as noted in the project plans, will need to be bonded based on the proposed phase limits and the contractor's estimate of the work to be performed during that phase. Said bond will follow the guidelines established in the Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 17.08 and will be approved by the Township Board prior to the start on any phase. An escrow account will be established as part of the bond to cover Township costs for site inspection and site plan compliance.
3. In the event the Zoning Administrator finds that site lighting does not conform with the standards of the Zoning Ordinance or there are complaints from the public regarding the site lighting, the Administrator will take appropriate action to work with the project owner to resolve the issue/concern. If the issue/concern cannot be resolved, the Zoning Administrator will refer the issue/concern to the Township Board for action.
4. If the property owner proposed to divide the property or sell off portions of the property to another entity, the proposed land division shall be approved by the Planning Commission and Township Board as it impacts the Planned Development approved by the Township Board.
5. Site landscaping shall achieve the standard of screening the view of the site from the public right-of-way within 5 years of initial planting. All planting will be maintained in living conditions during this period. Plants or vegetation not found to be in a living condition by the Zoning Administrator, or their designee will be replaced by the owner within six weeks upon notice by the Zoning Administrator.

