

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING
COVERT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.
COVERT TOWNSHIP HALL

AGENDA

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
 : March 19, 2025
4. Public Comments (*3 minutes/person*)
5. Public Hearing
 - A. Zoning Ordinance Amendments related to Short-Term Rentals
 - Section 2.02 – Definitions (*P.H. Notice Item 1.*)
 - Section 18.36 – Short-Term Rentals (*P.H. Notice Item 2.*)
6. New Business

No New Business is scheduled for consideration
7. Ongoing Business
 - A. Master Plan/Coastal Management Plan
 - *Continue Review – pages 55-87 (end), Draft #1*
8. Communications
9. Public Comments (*3 minutes/person*)
10. Adjournment

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: *Please notify the Planning Commission Chair no later than the day before the scheduled meeting if you are unable to attend the meeting. In the event of a lack of a quorum, the meeting will be canceled.*

COVERT TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 19, 2025 REGULAR MEETING

6:30 P.M., COVERT TOWNSHP HALL

Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Rendell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Robert Brown, Tom Bury, Wayne Rendell, Lonzey Taylor

Members Absent: Luke Dennison, Austin Harding, Jena Johnson

Others Present: Rebecca Harvey, Township Planning Consultant

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Brown, seconded by Taylor, to approve the agenda of the March 19, 2025 regular meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – February 19, 2025 Regular Meeting

Motion by Bury, seconded by Taylor, to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2025 regular meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Barbara Rose reported that the Township Board approved the recommended text amendments regarding 'shipping containers'. She inquired if the Planning Commission had considered limiting the total number of shipping containers allowed within the Township. Commission members noted that given the unlimited use of 'shipping containers' allowed within the agricultural and industrial districts, the use levels would be difficult to anticipate. It was noted, however, that the standards could always be amended in the future if issues evolve.

No further public comment was offered.

New Business

Chair Rendell stated that no New Business was scheduled for consideration.

Ongoing Business

Text Amendment: Short Term Rentals (STRs)

Harvey presented Draft #2 of the proposed amendments to Section 2.02 – Definitions and Article 18 – General Provisions intended to provide for STRs in the Township, highlighting the revisions requested by the Commission in February.

Specifically, the Planning Commission agreed that subsection A. of the draft text should be revised to limit STRs to single-family dwellings and that subsection B. was found to be acceptable as written (i.e. allowing STRs in any residential district as an accessory use) if Ordinance #118 is amended to include a cap on STR activity. She noted that Draft #2 continues to include suggested amendments to Ordinance #118 for Township Board consideration.

The Planning Commission agreed that the draft text accurately reflects the discussion held in February. Chair Rendell stated that the public hearing on the proposed amendment has been scheduled/noticed for the April meeting.

Master Plan/Coastal Management Plan

Chair Rendell reminded that the first draft of the updated Master Plan/Coastal Management Plan was presented/distributed to the Planning Commission at the January meeting . . . and that it had been agreed that the Commission would conduct individual reviews of pages 1-58 (through Chapter 6) for discussion at the February meeting.

He stated that the Commission had provided review comments and held discussion on pages 1-9 (Chapters 1 & 2) of the draft document in February . . . and agreed to continue the review/discussion in March.

The Planning Commission then proceeded to provide review comments and hold discussion on pages 10-54 (Chapters 3-5) of the draft document, including detailed reviews of the maps contained therein.

It was agreed that the Commission will conduct individual reviews of pages 55-87 (Chapters 6 through 11) in preparation for continued discussion of the draft Plan at the April Planning Commission meeting.

Chair Rendell advised that the Planning Commission should not feel rushed in the review process, but that steady progress is desired. He also reminded that Commission members are encouraged to provide comments/corrections related to the mechanics of the document directly to Harvey (via a 'marked up' document).

Communications

No communications were provided.

Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca Harvey, AICP, PCP
(McKenna)Township Planning Consultant

**COVERT TOWNSHIP
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

To: The residents and property owners of Covert Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, and any other interested persons:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Covert Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and meeting on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Covert Township Hall, 73943 E. Lake Street, Covert, Michigan 49043. The items to be considered at this public hearing/meeting include the following:

1. Zoning Ordinance text amendments to Article 2, Section 2.02, Construction of Language and Definitions, to revise the definition of "Dwelling," and to add the following new terms and definitions in alphabetical order: Permanent Resident, Short-Term-Rental, Short-Rental Activity; and, define the same; and,
2. Zoning Ordinance text amendments to Article 18, to add new Section 18.36, titled, "Short-Term Rentals;" to allow only single-family dwellings to be used as short-term rentals; to consider a short-term rental an accessory use; to require compliance with Ordinance No. 118, and the Housing and Property Maintenance Code; to set parking standards and compliance with Article 19 of the Zoning Ordinance; to provide for repeal of conflicting ordinances; to provide severability; and, to set and effective date.
3. Such other matters as may properly come before the Planning Commission at this public hearing/meeting.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the full text of the proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendments may be obtained by contacting the Township Clerk at the phone number set forth below.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Planning Commission reserves the right to recommend approval of, denial of, or make modifications to the proposed amendments and may make its recommendation to the Township Board accordingly.

Written comments concerning the above matter(s) may be submitted to the chairperson of the Covert Township Planning Commission, or to the Clerk of Covert Township, at any time prior to the public hearing/meeting, and may further be submitted to the Planning Commission at the public hearing/meeting.

Covert Township will provide necessary, reasonable auxiliary aids and services at the hearing/meeting to individuals with disabilities, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered, upon five (5) days notice to the Township Clerk of the need for the same.

COVERT TOWNSHIP
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Covert, MI 49043-0035
269-764-8986
clerk@covertwp.com
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Covert Township

Planning Commission

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Short-Term Rentals (STRs)

Article 2 CONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONS

Section 2.02 Definitions

(AMEND)

Dwelling Unit – A building or a mobile home or portion thereof connected to an approved sanitary wastewater collection and disposal system and having cooking, sanitary, bathing, dining, and sleeping facilities, intended for occupancy by **not more than one (1) family for residential purposes, either on a permanent or transient basis of permanent residents**. A mobile home can be classified as a dwelling unit only after meeting the standards of a mobile home as defined herein. (See Mobile Home)

(ADD)

Permanent Resident – Any person who has resided in the same dwelling unit for a period of more than 30 consecutive days is construed as a permanent resident for the purpose of this Ordinance.

Short-Term Rental – A dwelling in which short-term rental activity is allowed to occur subject to the terms and conditions of this Ordinance, the Short-Term Rental Ordinance (Ordinance #118), and the Housing and Property Maintenance Code.

Short-Term Rental Activity – The rental of a dwelling for a term of less than 31 consecutive days. However, short-term rental activity does not include the following: transitional housing operated by a nonprofit entity, group homes such as nursing homes and adult foster care homes, hospitals, or housing provided by a substance abuse rehabilitation clinic, mental health facility, or other health care related clinic, or dwelling units owned by a business entity and made available on a temporary basis to employees of that business entity or employees of a contractor working for that business entity.

Covert Township

Planning Commission

Article 18 GENERAL PROVISIONS

(ADD)

Section 18.36 – Short-Term Rentals

- A. Only single-family dwellings shall be allowed to be used for short-term rental activity.
- B. Where allowed, short-term rental activity shall be considered a residential accessory use.
- C. A dwelling unit in which short-term rental activity is allowed to occur shall be subject to the terms and conditions of this Ordinance, the Short-Term Rental Ordinance (Ordinance #118), and the Housing and Property Maintenance Code.
- D. A dwelling unit in which short-term rental activity is allowed to occur must have a minimum of one (1) off-street parking space on the same lot as the short-term rental activity for each occupant’s vehicle in addition to any other spaces required under applicable laws, rules and regulations for any other uses in the building or on the premises. Off-street parking shall be subject to compliance with Article 19 of this Ordinance.

Suggested Companion Amendments to Ordinance #118 – Short Term Rentals

- Sec. 01-2. – Definitions**
 - Revise D.a. – ‘Dwelling Unit’ – consistent w/ Z.O. amendment
 - Delete H. – ‘Off-Street Parking’
 - Revise K. – ‘Short-Term Rental Activity’ – consistent w/ Z.O amendment
 - Revise L. – ‘Short-Term Rental’ – consistent w/ Z.O. amendment
 - Add – definition of ‘Permanent Resident’ – consistent w/ Z.O. amendment
- Sec 01-4 – Responsibilities of Short-Term Rental Operators**
 - Revise G. – *Rental of partial dwelling units. ~~prohibited.~~* This Ordinance pertains **only** to **both** the short-term rental of an entire dwelling unit **and** the short-term rental of a partial dwelling unit (e.g. a room or rooms within a dwelling unit). ~~is prohibited.~~