

**Township of Wayland
Minutes of a Planning Commission Meeting
Held on June 10, 2026**

A meeting of the Wayland Township Planning Commission was conducted on June 10, 2026, commencing at 6:30 p.m. at the SS. Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church, 159 131st Ave, Wayland, Michigan.

Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

Present were:

Larry Brenner, Jerry Ross, Rodney Standish, Jim Stoddard, Matt Miner, **Scott Sprague**

Absent was:

~~Scott Sprague~~

Also present was Township Zoning Consultant, Rebecca Harvey, Township Attorney Seth Koches, and at least 50 members of the public.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented.

Minutes

The draft May 13, 2026, draft meeting minutes were accepted as revised.

Public Comment

A Landowner said that he was in favor of the solar project. He said that it is difficult to make money off the land and the project allows for the opportunity for it to be used. He said that farming uses contaminants and that the project lasts for 40-years, but farmland will be preserved.

A property owner said that using property for solar will provide for retirement. He said that if the project isn't approved the landowner may need to sell to a housing developer which will be more impactful.

A 5th generation farmer said that his farm has been in the family for 180 years. He said that he toured the Coldwater facility and was pleased with the solar project.

A resident discussed Section 18 of the Zoning Ordinance, requesting conditions to SLU approvals. He said that a 706-acre solar farm fundamentally changes the community. He asked for community trails system that provides safer travel alternatives than the road shoulder and that Apex expressed willingness to do it. He said that a trail system could be incorporated into the project and requested easements to allow for this trail system be a condition of approval. He discussed a map of the trails were contained on a poster for the public to review.

A resident thanked the Planning Commission and discussed the solar project and vision pollution. He discussed a good-neighbor contract that was offered to adjoining landowner and was concerned with the contract and what it actually offered as it was 10-pages long. He requested approval of the project in order to keep the MPSC from making decisions within the Township, and, requested soil samples be taken and other control measures and screening.

Data Center Zoning Ordinance.

The next item on the agenda was discussions of a data center (moratorium) ordinance. The Planning Chair said that the Township cannot exclude a use because that may be exclusionary zoning. The Planning Commission discussed a 1-year moratorium ordinance. Becky Harvey provided informational correspondence for the Planning Commission relevant to creating a Data Center Zoning Ordinance amendment. Harvey discussed the MZEA and exclusionary zoning. She said that the Planning Commission needs to research where a Data Center may be allowed in the Township and consider regulations for the same.

The Planning Commission asked Harvey to set a public hearing for July 2026 to consider a Data Center Moratorium Zoning Ordinance amendment.

Solar Energy Systems Zoning Ordinance Amendment.

The next item on the agenda was general discussion of a solar energy system Zoning Ordinance amendment. The Planning Commissioners discussed the proposed amendments and asked the amendment to be set for a public hearing at the July 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

Battery Energy Storage Systems Zoning Ordinance.

The next item was general discussions of a Battery Energy Storage Systems Ordinance. The Planning Commissioners and Harvey discussed the Battery Energy Systems Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission asked that this ordinance be set for public hearing at the July 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

Blazing Star Solar – discussion of Blazing Star Solar, LLC application for special land use and site plan approval to construct a 125 MW solar energy system.

The next item was continued deliberations of the Blazing Star special land use and site plan request for a 125 MW solar energy system. The Planning Commission closed the public hearing

at the May 13, 2026, Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission Chair said that the Applicant submitted a third supplementary report in response to the Township Attorney's Report, the Zoning Administrator's Report and the Engineer's Report.

The Applicant addressed the Planning Commission and said that he agreed to the screening that was specified by the Zoning Administrator; the Applicant confirmed all lighting was in compliance with Zoning Ordinance standards and confirmed that the escrow balance remains funded. The Applicant said that a sound study will be provided to confirm compliance. The Applicant agreed to the conditions discussed by the Township Attorney at the public hearing.

Harvey prepared a staff report, dated June 10, and summarized it. Harvey noted that the comments in bold font were responses from the Applicant to try to address the questions that were raised by the Planning Commission at the May 13, 2026 public hearing. Harvey said that there are no above ground transmission lines. Harvey said that the Applicant suggested to an alternative plan, and the Planning Commission may decide whether they want compliance with the Zoning Ordinance standard or consider the alternative plan, which the Planning Commission is authorized to do. Harvey noted that there were additional locations for screening, and the Applicant may install it if the landowner(s) will allow them to. Harvey said that the proposed light fixtures are in compliance with ordinance standards. Harvey said that the Township did not receive anything from Applicant relating to sound. Harvey discussed a 45-decibel limitation but also noted that there are no specific sound decibel limitations in the current Zoning Ordinance, but levels will be contemplated at the July 2026 public hearing. The Planning Commissioners discussed the enforceability of the Township's general noise ordinance.

Harvey discussed SLU criteria and said that those standards apply to the Application. Harvey said that all standards must be satisfied in order for the Planning Commission to approve the project. Harvey discussed decommissioning and said that the Applicant agreed to all conditions related to decommissioning that were recommended by the township attorney and agreed to execute a Decommissioning Agreement.

Miner discussed noise and suggested that the Planning Commission would have to approve the Application and then establish sound study after the fact to confirm compliance. Miner expressed concerns about approving the project without knowing the results of the sound study. Harvey recommended that the Planning Commission require an ISO-plan in order to provide more detailed information about where the project may exceed 45 decibels.

Mike Vogt addressed the Planning Commission to discuss sound impact. He said that the Zoning Ordinance in the current form doesn't have a threshold level. He said that 45 decibels would be unworkable and that it is a low level for any use. Vogt suggested that instead of 45 DBA, the Applicant will agree to a standard that is more restrictive than the MPSC standard (i.e. lower than 55 DBA but higher than 45 DBA). Vogt asked for conditional approval for 50 DBA measured from the outer wall of the nearest structure of a non-participating property. He said that this type

of condition sets expectations and can be confirmed before construction. The Applicant said that they will agree to this condition because it allows them to test the noise level of the actual project. The Applicant said that they need to measure ambient noise and determine whether the solar project is still within regulation.

Miner said that ambient level may be measured right now. He said that the project will be making noise from sun up to sun down. The Applicant said that the project won't operate at night and they will commit to sound regulations. The Applicant said that they haven't had issues with sound complaints with other operational projects. The Applicant confirmed that the Coldwater DBA limitation is 55 DBA. The Applicant said that they did a noise study in Coldwater and post operational sound measurements. The Applicant said that the study can't show that the project is producing less noise that is already existing in the community.

Miner said that the Township has an anti-noise ordinance and read it. Miner said that he is concerned that the anti-noise ordinance will be violated. Harvey asked whether the Applicant can provide a sound iso-plan that shows an average of noise along non-participating property lines. Vogt said that the Applicant could provide mitigation plans if it is needed. Miner said that he would like an iso-plan. Miner said that all standards need to be satisfied before he can vote to approve it.

Vogt discussed that the anti-noise ordinance could be enforced against the project. He said that if the project makes noise and then no solar SLU may be approved. Harvey felt that a request for more information is reasonable to determine whether the criteria is satisfied, and whether the impact criteria are met. Harvey said that providing that information is a pathway to a solution.

Gerald Hess is the Applicant's in-house counsel. He said that an iso-line plan needs a layout of the project (i.e. panels to get an accurate impact of how the sound carries over the infrastructure). He said that once that is in place, then the iso-plan can confirm that the standards are met. He said that until they know where the panels are, it is speculative. Harvey asked whether the solar panel layout that was provided was sufficient. The Applicant said that if there are changes made before a building permit, then the Township will determine whether a site plan amendment is required by the Planning Commission.

Vogt said that there will almost certainly be some level of site plan revisions. Harvey asked for an iso-plan now and then address revisions if the panel layout changes. Hess said that it is not possible. Hess said that the solution is tied to a permit condition (i.e. that all conditions are satisfied before a building permit is issued). He said that he doesn't feel that 45 DBA may be met at the property line. Harvey asked the Applicant to commit to 50 – 55 DBA level. The Planning Commission was concerned with satisfying impact-based standards. Hess said that the second supplemental report submitted included expected sound related to noise from the inverter and a sound expert discussed sound impact at the public hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed whether adding one condition is reasonable when the Planning Commission has done this for other applicants. A Commissioner said that the Applicant must satisfy the standards before construction begins. The Applicant agreed to 50 DBA from outer wall of every house within the Township. Planning Commission discussed establishing ambient noise level. Harvey confirmed that 45 DBA is not a standard in the Zoning Ordinance at this time.

The Township Attorney presented the resolution to the Planning Commission for review and discussion. The resolution contained a finding of fact for all applicable special land use standards and site plan review standards. The Township Attorney read each standard in the findings resolution and summarized the Planning Commissioners' deliberations therein. The resolution is incorporated by reference into these meeting minutes, which concluded with a 4-3 roll call vote to approve the Application, with conditions.

The Planning Commission Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

T. Seth Koches, Recording Secretary