

**Minutes of the regular meeting of the Georgetown Township Planning Commission, held Wednesday, July 2, 2025.**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Josiah Samy at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Josiah Samy (Chairman Samy), Jeannine Bolhouse, Tom Healy, Jessica Ulberg, Geoff Brown, Gary Veldink

Absent: Brian Reed

Also present: Ryan Schab, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

**#250702-01 – Planning Commission Agenda for [July 2, 2025](#)**

Moved by Gary Veldink, seconded by Geoff Brown, to approve the agenda of the [July 2, 2025](#) meeting as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#250702-02 – Minutes of the [June 18, 2025](#) Planning Commission Meeting**

Moved by Gary Veldink, seconded by Chairman Samy, to approve the minutes of [June 18, 2025](#) as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#250702-03 – Old Business – (SUP 2502) 7537 20th Ave LLC, 7537 20th Ave. to have a restaurant (no drive-through), under Sec. 13.3(B), on a parcel of land described as P.P. # 70-14-15-327-024, located at 7537 20th Ave., in a Office Service (OS) Commercial district, Georgetown Township, Ottawa County, Michigan. ([Site Plan](#), [General Notes Revision](#), [Application](#), [Fee Paid](#))**

No action was taken on this agenda item as the Applicant is working on a revised plan. An additional notice will be sent to adjacent property owners when a new plan is submitted.

**#250702-04 – (SUP2503) River City Steamboat Company, LLC, Gregory Boynton, 825 Taylor St., is requesting Special Land Use approval to have a commercial campground under Sec. 7.3 (A) and 6.3 (K); in a (RR) Rural Residential district, on a parcel of land described as P.P. # 70-14-02-200-013, located at 825 Taylor St., Georgetown Township, Ottawa County, Michigan. ([Site Plan](#), [Application](#), [Fee Paid](#))**

Gregory Boynton, the Applicant, delivered his presentation to the Planning Commission.

The ZA presented the [Staff Report](#) to the Planning Commission.

Tom Healy asked the Applicant to confirm that there are no additional buildings proposed.

Gregory Boynton stated that the campground previously decided that it is much easier to get approval to put structures on trailers, like their bathhouse, than obtain state approval to build more structures on foundations. Any additional restrooms/showers will also be placed on trailers because it allows the campground to pull them out of there should they get any heavy flooding.

Jeannine Bolhouse asked what part of this process will require a building permit.

The Applicant stated that building permits with the Township have not been required in the past to construct the campsites, but he does need to receive a construction permit from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). They have their own standards.

The ZA stated that since a building permit is not required, the Planning Commission could change the language in the motion to say that a Storm Water Drain Permit from the Ottawa County Water Resources Commission (OCRWC) is required, without stipulating at the time of building permit submission.

The Applicant stated that the Storm Water Drain Permit and Soil Erosion Permit should already have been sent to the ZA.

The ZA was unable to confirm but would check and follow up with the Applicant.

Jeannine Bolhouse asked the Applicant to confirm that there are no plans to review for the marina use and asked whether a building permit would be required.

The Applicant stated that permits are required at the state level for marinas since the construction will take place in the floodplain, wetland, etc. It is reviewed by federal and state agencies simultaneously.

Jeannine Bolhouse asked if there are any restrictions with regard to size or number of structures.

The ZA stated that the campground is a commercial use and since it is in RR, it must meet the special land use standards. There is not a specific limit set at the local level for the size and number of structures allowed but the Applicant will have to ensure that they are compliant with all state and federal requirements. If the Applicant wants to add additional structures beyond what is being approved at this meeting, they will have to submit a site plan revision application, so the Township is aware of any new structures on the site.

Jeannine Bolhouse asked whether the portable trailers require building permits.

The ZA stated that they do not require building permits if they are not on a foundation, but they should be shown on the site plan. The ZA recommended that the Applicant submit a new site plan revision if they decide to add additional structures, even if portable.

Chairman Samy asked if this plan has any bearing on the Bend in the River County Parks plan.

The ZA stated that this is the Applicant's property, but it is located in the same general area. It may be worth thinking about how the use fits in relation to the Bend in the River plan, but it will not have any bearing on the future park.

The Applicant stated that he is the Treasurer of the Ottawa County Parks Foundation, so he is indeed in contact with the parks and is aware of the plan.

Chairman Samy stated he wanted to confirm since the staff report discusses the airport as a neighbor but the parcel to the north appears to be where the Bend in the River starts.

The ZA confirmed that the parcel to the north is where the Ottawa County Parks land begins.

Jessica asked to confirm the number of campsites being proposed.

The Applicant stated that with the new addition, there will be about 205 sites. It depends on how the layout works with the trees. They try to preserve as many trees as possible so sometimes the sites/paths will change depending on which trees will survive.

Jessica Ulberg noted that the north area addition site plan shows sites 122-160.

The Applicant stated that the numbering on the site plan is not sequential at all, sometimes numbers are skipped so they can easily direct people with signage to specific blocks of sites.

Gary Veldink asked if there is a limit to the amount of time a campground can operate for a season. He is worried about a scenario where there are 200 campers permanently living in what would effectively be a shantytown. If someone else bought this campground, he is worried it could be advertised as affordable housing unless there are rules directly preventing such an outcome.

Tom Healy stated that there should be a standard added to Sec. 20.4 SITE DESIGN STANDARDS (F) for commercial campgrounds that addresses that potential issue.

The Applicant stated that the state already prevents that type of operation. Besides that, it is not necessarily a concern for this area because it can flood from March-early June. Currently they do allow for some wintertime campers for people who are remodeling or staying out of town for work, around 40 units. In order to comply with the state, all the wintertime campers must pack up and move out May 1<sup>st</sup>. Everyone is required to have the capability to move their unit, they cannot just drop a trailer off that could be stuck indefinitely. Mobile homes are not allowed.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that she knows the buses will pick up there year-round.

Tom Healy asked where the May 1<sup>st</sup> date came from.

The Applicant stated that May 1<sup>st</sup> is when a higher fee can be charged for the sites.

Tom Healy asked the Applicant how he would craft language to prevent people from living there year-round.

The Applicant stated that a long season is around 8-9 months. The state does not want people living there year-round and neither does he. They are required to vacate the property and move to a different location off the site. The only people that approach the year-round mark are seasonal workers that are reading meters or doing other types of maintenance.

Gary Veldink asked how many people in total fit into that category that may be living there year-round and if ten would be a good number.

The Applicant stated that it would be more than enough to accommodate the few workers that may be there year-round.

Gary Veldink stated that he understands there are seasonal workers that may use the site as an easy place to live, and he is not opposed to that. He is opposed to all 205 sites being used as permanent residences.

Chairman Sammy suggested limiting the number of sites to allow for someone to live there year-round to 5%.

The Applicant stated that he would be willing to accept no winter sites allowed.

Gary Veldink stated that he is not willing to go that far, he understands that there are extenuating circumstances to have that availability.

Tom Healy stated that he does not believe it is the winter camping that anyone is opposed to, it is the year-round camping.

The Applicant stated that the state has been proactive about cracking down on people living at campground year-round. There is a long history of that type of living in Michigan.

Chairman Sammy opened the public hearing.

Chairman Sammy closed the public hearing.

**Moved by Tom Healy, seconded by Gary Veldink to adopt the staff report as finding of fact and approve the following motion:**

**Special Use Permit**

**Motion: To approve Special Use Permit (SUP2503) River City Steamboat LLC, 825 Taylor St., to have a commercial campground under Sec. 6.3(K) and a marina under Sec. 6.3(T), on a parcel of land described as P.P. # 70-14-02-200-013 (only part for the marina), located at 825 Taylor St., in a (RR) Rural Residential district, Georgetown Township, Ottawa County, MI, based on the findings that all applicable standards of the ordinance have been met including the general special use standards in Sec. 20.3 and the specific standards in Sec. 20.4(F) and (W).**

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Moved by Gary Veldink, seconded by Geoff Brown to approve the following motion:**

**Site Plan**

**Motion: To approve the site plan dated 1-9-2024, as presented based on the findings that all applicable standards of the ordinance have been met, based on the findings that:**

- 1. The parking calculations are acceptable.**
- 2. The landscaping along Taylor St. is acceptable.**
- 3. The existing woods and foliage provide adequate screening to sufficiently screen the activities from the abutting property owners.**

**and with the following conditions:**

- 1. Approved sign permits must be obtained prior to any sign changes.**
- 2. All sanitary facilities shall be designed and constructed in strict conformance to all applicable County health regulations.**
- 3. The development of the entire lot is subject to all applicable requirements of the Department of Natural Resources. The plan indicates compliance.**
- 4. A Storm Water Drain Permit (written approval) from the Water Resources Office (Drain Commissioner) is required.**
- 5. The Georgetown Township Fire Department will review the gravel drive for compliance with Fire Code standards.**
- 6. Not more than 5% of total campsites may be occupied by the same camper for greater than 12 months.**

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#250702-05 – Master Plan Review with Tanya DeOliveira – Williams & Works ([Master Plan Memo](#), [Chapter 2 – Demographics](#), [Chapter 3 – Natural Features](#))**

Tanya DeOliveira offered to walk the Planning Commission through the drafts of Chapters 2 and 3 if needed. Chapter 1 will be written at the end of the process.

The ZA stated that he was impressed by the layout and style of both chapters, recognizing that this is not a final draft. The first two chapters consist of objective information and data. He pointed out the wetland map as it was discussed at the previous meeting, specifically pointing out the south side of Chicago Dr. There is less wetland area than was previously speculated, there is however, a lot of FEMA designated floodplain in that area. The ZA received a question about what sort of developments could go in the floodplain. Overall, it is difficult to say because before building in a wetland or a FEMA designated floodplain, an applicant must receive approval from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). They must coordinate with professional floodplain engineers to determine what type of development they can construct and what requirements they need to meet.

Geoff Brown stated that in 2013, FEMA designated a lot of land in the Township as floodplain. He asked if there is a way to find out how much land was added to FEMA's and EGLE's jurisdiction, specifically from 2012 – 2013. He also acknowledged that the Township has lost agricultural land throughout the years, and the Planning Commission has discussed preservation of some of that land. It would be helpful to know how much the Township has lost over time if there is a way to find that out.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that her counterpart in her office does the GIS work and if they were able to obtain the map from prior to FEMA updating it, they could compare that to the map today. It is worth noting that the Township does not have much say over those designations so there is a question about the utility of that information. The AG land comparison depends on what is previously available at the local level. The rate of change in the past is not always a great predictor of the future.

Gary Veldink stated that Ottawa County has historical photographs available and you can see the progression of the Township through those photos.

Geoff Brown stated that before he was on the Planning Commission, he found himself questioning the reasons behind some of the decisions in previous Master Plans. The information he is asking for could provide important context as to why the Planning Commission is making their decisions. He does understand there are things the Township cannot control like FEMA.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that without having investigated what GIS data is available about farmland in the Township with exact percentages, one thing the Planning Commission could do is put the historical photos that would visually show change over time.

Geoff Brown agreed that the photos could illustrate the point he is trying to convey to the public. If the Planning Commission designates an area as agricultural and someone wants to develop it, the photos could be used to show why the Planning Commission wants to preserve some of the Township's farmland.

Tanya DeOliveira agreed that if one of the Township's goals is to preserve farmland, the photos could help create a narrative that illustrates the encroachment or sprawl that has happened over the past few decades and show residents why some of that land needs to be preserved. Tanya DeOliveira stated from a process standpoint, she is taking all notes and comments and will revise this chapter for the Planning Commission, but they will still move forward evaluating different chapters.

Jeannine Bolhouse asked if everyone on the Planning Commission agrees with preserving farmland being a goal of the Master Plan.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that she is present to discuss elements of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 and not discuss goals. But she is interested in the ongoing conversation and debate that the Planning Commission is having, she can certainly add these photos to a draft of the Master Plan if the Planning Commission is comfortable with it.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that she is not disagreeing with adding the photos. She presented the counter argument which is that the market can dictate what to do with that land. People may own AG land and want to change it to something more conducive of the economy. We could end up with a lot of empty AG land because it has been designated that way and people cannot change it.

Tom Healy pointed out the new residential construction graph in Chapter 2, it says that most of the Township housing is in urban areas representing 96.6% of the total housing stock. This is a direct consequence of the Planning Commission not allowing new developments to leapfrog one another. And Chapter 3 discusses the decrease in farmland over the past 20 years due to continued development of residential areas. This illustrates that the Planning Commission has done an effective job planning development and keeping it concentrated. The Township Supervisor commented that the goal should not be to simply move on to the next development as soon as one is finished.

Chairman Samy clarified that today's meeting is about Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, to make best use of the planner's time, the Planning Commission should focus on changes they want to see made to the proposed chapters. He understands that the Planning Commission has a lot of ideas for goals.

Tom Healy stated that he would like to see clarity on what could be done in a floodplain. He referenced the flood retaining wall built in Frankenmuth. Property owners could make better use

of the property on the south side of Chicago Dr. if there was an effort to develop a common space parking area next to the floodplain which would allow for the streetside development to be moved closer to Chicago Dr. If the Township had a stake in that development, it might solve several problems. It would be helpful to know what kind of development could go in on the south side of Chicago Dr. given the floodplain and wetland area.

Gary Veldink stated that wetland area is determined by vegetation as much as it is determined by water. He provided an example of the installation of a sidewalk on 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. There was a ditch with cattails and the mitigation efforts cost \$100,000. It can be difficult to deal with EGLE requirements.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that Gary Veldink's information helps to prove Tom Healy's point. Sometimes development is not happening due to additional costs the Township may not be aware of, not because of limitations we are placing on a parcel. It is important to know why land is not being developed.

Tom Healy stated that if the Township and County, for example, work together to mitigate those costs, the Township could still benefit in the long term from that property being developed.

Gary Veldink stated that from a Township standpoint, does it make sense to spend millions of dollars mitigating wetland concerns so that buildings can be constructed along Rush Creek, or do you take that money and spend it on the sewer line down 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. that will allow you to develop a larger area of property through the northwest quadrant that is not located in a wetland and you do not need to deal with EGLE. He questioned what the effect would be on the value of a property that the Township has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars mitigating wetland concerns. There are a lot of numbers to evaluate to see if that type of investment is worthwhile.

Chairman Samy asked if Tom Healy is trying to understand what could be done on those parcels if someone had unlimited resources.

Tom Healy stated that when he looks around the Township, he sees multiple vehicle repair shops, multiple oil change places, and multiple takeout pizza places. These are the businesses that fit given the Township's height, length, and setback requirements. When he looks at Chicago Dr., there is a lot of infrastructure already built there. Maybe it is more economical to build down 48<sup>th</sup> Ave., but he recognizes that the south side of Chicago Dr. is underutilized. These should be considerations in the Master Plan.

Geoff Brown stated that his priority would be to develop Chicago Dr. over 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. because that is a commercial area. He believes it is important to develop our commercial areas and increase the commercial tax base to remove some of the tax burden off private citizens.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that location should be a consideration there as well. While Georgetown does not have a "downtown," the Chicago Dr. Corridor is in the heart of the community.

Geoff Brown stated that if the Township continues to prioritize building houses, then people will continue to spend their dollars elsewhere. If the Master Plan focuses on making Georgetown Township more attractive to commercial businesses, that could improve the tax base at a much higher rate.

Tom Healy asked about the status of the mixed use/hotel development that was planned on the Rush Creek property.

Chairman Samy stated that there have been preapplication meetings that have stalled as the Planning Commission is going through the Master Plan review process. The developer has stated that hotel use is down since 2020 as people are not traveling as much for work and more communication is electronic, also things like Airbnb's have become more popular. The decision to move away from the hotel use was determined by market factors and not by the site not supporting that use.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that the graphs are difficult to read due to her color blindness. She understands that the Georgetown Township colors were used but it is hard to differentiate the two on the graphs.

There was a consensus among the Planning Commission to change the colors on the graphs to make it easier to see and differentiate.

Jeannine Bolhouse commented on the fact 82% commute in their car by themselves. It is sad and ridiculous, but it is the reality, and she believes that it will continue to get worse. She works for Kent County, and they are currently dealing with the amphitheater and soccer stadium being constructed, they are trying to figure out where people will go. People will be driving in to attend events, driving out, and drinking while they are there. There is also no available transportation whatsoever. She acknowledged that America was built on highways, but it is a real problem.

Chairman Samy stated that there are talks of bringing in an aquarium to Kent County. This could cause congestion issues. Georgetown Township does not have any public transportation infrastructure. Not to say that the Township should start creating stops and bus lines, but a question should be whether the Township should tie in something between us and Grand Rapids.

Gary Veldink stated that there will never be public transportation in Georgetown Township.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that she does not disagree with Gary because with 87% of people in the Township driving cars, it is a major uphill climb. Buses also do not feel like the answer because if there is going to be traffic regardless, it makes more sense to be in a car over a bus.

Gary Veldink stated that it is not what the buses bring out but what the buses bring in.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that bringing in another form of transportation beyond buses is astronomically expensive and will never happen. There are also issues with commuter lots. Transportation is a huge problem in our world.

Gary Veldink asked if traffic in Grand Rapids is a problem.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that she commutes to downtown Grand Rapids daily and if there are no accidents it can take 15 minutes, if there is one accident it can take an hour and a half.

Gary Veldink stated that it is sometimes quicker to get from his house on Edson Dr. to Van Andel Arena than it is to get across the Township.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that there is an accident almost every single day causing the drive to take over an hour.

Gary Veldink stated that the traffic issues in West Michigan do not compare to Los Angeles traffic that he experienced while working there.

Chairman Samy encouraged all opinions to be respected and stated that different arguments can each have merit.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that her concern is rooted in the fact of where the Grand River and Grand Valley State University are in relation to our community. People from Allendale either take Lake Michigan Dr. or drive through our community to get downtown. This causes traffic problems in Cottonwood Dr. in the morning.

There was consensus among the Planning Commission that there are traffic issues in the morning on Cottonwood Dr.

Chairman Samy stated that he would like to see a pie chart added in the race section of Chapter 2. He would prefer to see the bar graphs on page 2 and 8 of Chapter 2 be consistent, with the old data on top and newer data on bottom. He asked Tanya DeOliveira if the data for transportation was based on the 2020 US Census and asked for clarification on the American Community Survey.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that the Census is taken every 10 years, but the American Community Survey is taken more frequently. It can provide more current information but is not necessarily as accurate because it is a survey. Williams & Works tries to use the most accurate information.

Chairman Samy stated that the reason for his question is because the work from home data might be skewed due to 2020 COVID restrictions.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that the American Community Survey information provides more current information that helps the data to not be as skewed, she will clarify the methodology used for that table as both the 2020 US Census and American Community Survey are used as sources.

Chairman Samy asked if there is any way to break down the transportation data by demographics.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that the US Census data information is available for anyone to review.

Chairman Samy stated that his reasoning for asking is because the Master Plan is a plan for the future. It may be helpful to see if different age groups are working from home/looking for different types of transit compared to the aging population. This would be helpful information for the Planning Commission as they are crafting the Master Plan.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that if that information was put into the Master Plan it would start to look more like a spreadsheet than a table.

Chairman Samy asked if that data could be provided to the ZA.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that they could provide that information to the ZA. She reiterated that the US Census information is all available online and anyone can do more research on their

community. The Master Plan chapter is meant to provide a broad overview, but members of the Planning Commission could certainly do more research into US Census data.

Jessica Ulberg stated she found the data fascinating, particularly the data on size of households. She did find some grammatical errors but can save those types of things for emails to the ZA.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that grammatical errors can be sent to the ZA, but Williams & Works will also do a full grammatical review before the final draft is put together.

Gary Veldink stated that he found the data on new constructions of residential properties to be the most interesting. As that continues to fall, it can have implications on the budget. He also stated that there are some major land acquisitions happening around the Township that could happen in the next 5-10 years for future development of residential properties.

Tom Healy asked Gary Veldink if his understanding that the lack of housing being built is a consequence of lots not being available.

Gary Veldink confirmed it is due to lack of available lots for sale or infrastructure to build on those lots. The sewer line on 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. will constrain development for the time being. The Township will need to coordinate with Blendon Township for the development of the northwest quadrant. There is potential for a commercial corridor if coordinated with Blendon Township. He believes that a gas station is planned in Blendon on the corner of 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Port Sheldon St. He compared it to the Baldwin/36<sup>th</sup> Ave. corner.

Tom Healy stated that Gary Veldink's argument is consistent with the "spot zoning" the Planning Commission has discussed at previous meetings but worried about how feasible it is to cut off a zoning district at a specific parcel line.

Gary Veldink stated that at the end of the day everything is market driven. Auto parts stores in the Township seem to do well.

Tom Healy asked if there is a location for Bosco's yet.

The ZA stated that the owner is in preliminary conversations about a different location in Georgetown Township.

Tanya DeOliveira stated that this conversation is why she enjoys attending the Planning Commission meetings in person. This discussion is helpful for her to hear as we work through the other chapters. The Master Plan will not solve every issue that is discussed but it will help to provide a roadmap towards solutions. These conversations will ensure that everyone is invested in the Master Plan, and it will be a better document for it. The implementation chapter at the end will provide a guide for how to start working towards accomplishing the goals of the Master Plan for the next 5-10 years. The next meeting in August will be a review of the next couple of chapters and will consist of a lot of objective data. It will also be a good time to start talking about the engagement events and the community survey.

There was consensus among the Planning Commission to get started on the community engagement events and survey to allow them to be scheduled before the winter and provide ample time for people to complete the survey.

The ZA stated that he is working on the parking ordinance review from the previous meeting and does not anticipate another meeting for the Planning Commission in July. The next meeting will be held on August 6<sup>th</sup> and will also be dedicated to Master Plan review.

Tom Healy stated that he will miss the August 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Gary Veldink stated that he read through the previous minutes regarding the parking ordinance and wanted to state that parking is an important issue and tough to address. He brought up the recurring issues at Impact Volleyball where there is often too little parking available.

Chairman Samy stated that he agrees parking is important. The problem is there is a lack of consistency in how it is calculated which contributes to situations where way too much is required or not enough is required.

Gary Veldink agreed with that assessment and believes that the Planning Commission made the correct call with Bosco's parking calculation at 7537 20<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Jeannine Bolhouse does not disagree that parking is important as the demographics in Chapter 2 show how many people drive. But often the amount of parking required for a use deters businesses from moving into the Township. It is not ideal that people are parking on separate lots in the Impact Volleyball example, but she questioned whether the solution is to continue to pave fields of asphalt. Sometimes you may have to find a parking spot somewhere and walk.

Gary Veldink agreed there is an issue with people's unwillingness to use sidewalks around the Township.

Geoff Brown wanted to clarify that his line of questioning earlier in the meeting was not because he necessarily supports preserving an AG block, it was that providing those historical photos would be helpful in making that argument if the Planning Commission agreed to do that.

Chairman Samy stated his concern of Grand Valley State University encroaching on the Township in the northwest quadrant.

Geoff Brown stated that it would be important to communicate with Allendale Township regarding that issue. It should be addressed in the Master Plan.

Tom Healy asked if Grand Valley State University would be required to bring public water and sanitary sewer services.

Chairman Samy stated that they have ample funds, so even if it was a requirement, it may not matter to them.

Gary Veldink brought up the 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. corridor plan that originally called out that street as a boulevard. Now there are unanswered questions about the plans for that street.

Chairman Samy agreed that it would be worth evaluating the major throughfares in the Township as part of this process.

**#250702-06 – Communications, Letters and Reports****#250702-07 – Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

**#250702-08 – Other Business – Continued Master Plan Discussion**

Tom Healy thanked Tanya DeOliveira for her work putting together these chapters and thanked the ZA for the previous meeting minutes.

Jeannine Bolhouse asked if there is any appetite on the Township Board to revise the Liquor License ordinance because businesses are being denied because they do not offer food.

Gary Veldink does not believe there is an appetite to change that.

Tom Healy asked if Jeannine Bolhouse is referencing a salon offering a glass of wine.

Jeannine Bolhouse confirmed she is referencing that type of establishment or a bowling alley or golf simulator. Any business that may want to serve drinks but does not want to take on the responsibility of running a kitchen.

Geoff Brown pointed out examples in Blendon and Allendale where people sell alcohol and host food trucks.

Jeannine Bolhouse provided an example of a brewery that allows patrons to order a pizza to their establishment.

Tom Healy stated that he spent many years working for the Michigan Liquor Control Commission. He stated that many communities want the food requirement because what an establishment may propose to do one day can change dramatically and then you have a place only serving drinks at a bar without the other entertainment. Once the license is issued it can be transferred anywhere in the county.

Jeannine Bolhouse acknowledged the points made but questioned if a moral judgment is being made on allowing people to drink.

Chairman Samy stated that there are not many options in Georgetown to go enjoy a drink. Maybe not everyone wants to see a 24-hour establishment where drinks are served at 2 or 3 in the morning, but it can be on the establishment to run an effective business.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that if there was any appetite on the Township Board for that maybe it is a General Ordinance that needs to be revisited.

Gary Veldink stated that he would like to see a gun range incorporated into the Master Plan, but similar moral judgements could be made. He stated that Georgetown is a unique place that will never have a downtown.

Chairman Samy stated that he does not know if a downtown is what is needed. He mentioned the “Strong Towns” method. The township should find a good balance, where certain corners of the Township or pockets that have a community feel can offer amenities. It does not necessarily have to be a downtown.

Geoff Brown agreed that the Township needs to find a better balance. It is heavily residential, and he would like to see more businesses brought into the community. Pocket zoning or allowing businesses on some corners could help to balance out the Township and the tax burden.

Gary Veldink stated that Nu-Wool received a tax break to move into the Township.

Jeannine Bolhouse stated that the Township will need new taxpayers as the available land to develop residential properties is diminished and the cost of infrastructure increases. Eventually someone will have to pay for these costs.

Gary Veldink discussed the breakdown of the average person’s tax bill. Most of that money goes to schools and county.

Chairman Samy stated that he is concerned because if commercial and industrial areas are diminished in the future, then the assessor will place a higher factor to the residential areas.

Gary Veldink stated that he pays a full 18 mills on property that is not his primary residence. He has an issue with the fact that 25% of students that attend Jenison Public Schools do not live in the Township.

Jessica Ulberg stated that she lives in Georgetown in Jenison but is in Hudsonville School District. She has to school of choice to have her kids attend Jenison Public Schools.

Gary Veldink expressed his concern that Jenison is continuing to expand and build buildings while many of their students do not live in the district and their property taxes go elsewhere. It feels unfair that a lot of his taxes go to a school that has students that do not live here.

Tom Healy stated that the school receives more funding per pupil, which contributes to the schools trying to obtain more students.

Chairman Samy stated that the goal should be to find a better balance in the Township. If the requirements for businesses to operate in the Township are easier to meet, then that alone offers an incentive for them to come to Georgetown. For example, if they can build out more, higher, and are not required to have 20 acres in a PUD, that could help development. Maybe they do not need to meet the greenspace requirements in certain areas. Businesses want to come into the Township, and they must meet requirements that do not make the venture worthwhile. It is not about giving businesses tax breaks. It would be great to offer more to our residents.

### **#250702-09 – Adjournment**

Moved by Chairman Samy, seconded by Jessica Ulberg to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.