

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting held on Monday, July 14th, 2025 of the Benton Charter Township Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Trina Rodez, Joseph Taylor, Marletta Seats and Matt Davis
Members Absent:
Staff Present: Loyall Bennett, Caleb O'Toole and Deeann Scalf
Also present: Joe Truman, The Firm Plumbing Professional, LLC (Applicant), Kevin Barker, Barker Nestor (Architect), Mike Armstrong, Armstrong Construction (Contractor)

SILENT INVOCATION:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: No changes or corrections on the Zoning Ordinance Updates Discussion with Rebecca Harvey (Planning & Zoning Consultant) as well as Jeff Priebe's request to construct a Climate-Controlled-Interior-Storage Only Buildings on Enterprise Way for the Meeting Minutes held on June 23rd, 2025 Meeting, Mr. Davis advised of a minor change the Motion to Phase No. 1 - Item No. H and Phase No. 2 – Item No. G from No External Storage amended to No Outdoor Overnight Storage motioned and support of approval by Ms. Seats. Motion passed.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Owner The Firm Plumbing Professional LLC of 105 S Park Rd, Benton Harbor, MI is seeking Site Plan Approval to offer Large Storage Units with individual Electric and Gas Meters at 4090 E Napier (the former Hanson Cold Storage) in the A-A Rural Zoning District also known as Property ID No.: 11-03-0026-0011-07-0.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT: Mr. Bennett advised in July of 2023 The Firm Plumbing came in for a Special Use Permit to allow for Storage Containers and we are here tonight to approve or deny a Site Plan Approval for the layout. Back in July 2023 the Applicant was to come back to the Planning Commission once they had addressed lighting, access and screening and show final construction layout that is why we are here tonight.

Some of the items for this Project are as follows:

1. Phase (1)
 - a. (1) Story Block Building
 - b. (31) Large Units
 - c. (38) Smaller Units between 10 x 12 to 10 x 10 a Unit
 - d. Total of (69) Units
 - e. Climate Controlled
 - f. Manicured Grass, no landscaping at this time
 - g. Access Codes 24 / 7
 - h. Lounge Area is a Bathroom, not a place to congregate
 - i. Units will have their own Electrical
 - j. Units will have their own Gas
 - k. Tentative Hours 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for Noise

PUBLIC COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS: None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Davis was questioning the grading for the Hillandale Road side of the Project, that it may not meet the requirements for the 8' grade differential. And the grading at the Southern end of the road does not work, as he is an Engineer.

Joe Truman (Applicant) stated they were looking into possibly a retaining wall and not a berm. Mike Armstrong (Contractor) was trying to get a Civil Engineer in to discuss this further but were unable to on short notice for the Meeting. But they are looking at doing a retaining wall along the South Side along the Country Drain or they can have that slopped off, or does it have to be a retaining wall. Mr. Davis advised the drain on the access drives are at a 8' grade differential currently and that will not work on the South Side Drive off Hillandale. The Drive to the

Road will not work, they way it is layout right now. Mr. Davis did not see any dumpsters or dumpster enclosures either, is that not on the Plan at this time? Mr. Truman not at this time no. Mr. Taylor what about lighting, what will it consist of. Mr. Truman it will be all new lighting, but dull, not too bright due to Neighbors. It will be at the minimum code to be able to see to perimeter of the building.

Mr. Davis would like to make a Motion to approve the Site Plan Approval subject to the following Conditions previously approved:

1. Subject to Plans submitted by Barker Nestor (Architect) subject to today's date of July 14, 2025 with or without approval for South Hillandale Drive
2. Berrien County Health Department for the Well & Septic Approvals
3. Berrien County Road Department for the Road Way
4. Tentative Hours of Operation 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for noise purposes
5. Storage Units will have Access 24 / 7
6. Need Landscaping (manicured grass) during Phase No. 1
7. No Dumpsters at this time
8. No Outdoor Overnight Storage
9. (1) one year expiration from the approval of the Site Plan Approval by the Benton Charter Township Board

Ms. Seats supported the motion and the amended motion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT: None.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT: Mr. Davis advised there was a Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting scheduled on Tuesday, June 24th, 2025 regarding a Sign Height for a 50' Tall American Flag Pole at the front of the property located at Signature Toyota in relationship to one of the Florida Shootings at the School, and they would like to do a Memorial for that with a plaque on the ground at the base of the Flag Pole. ZBA Board did approve the request for this Flag Pole install.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Davis advised the Michigan University Extension held a Planning & Zoning for Solar Energy Systems Conference recently that him and Loyall Bennett attended. He mentioned it was very valuable and it solely focused on Solar Farms being 50 mega watt or larger, so mostly Commercial. He has passed around a Slide Show Page that has a QR Code to view if anyone would like. Mr. Davis thinks it was valuable and thinks the Township should be pursuing.

OTHER COMMENTS/CONCERNS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Davis motioned to adjourned Ms. Rodez supported. Motion carries and Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business before the PC, the Meeting was adjourned:

Minutes: Deeann Scalf the Secretary of the Planning Commission.

Loyall Bennett, Building Inspector