

Milton Township  
Planning Commission  
Unapproved Regular Meeting Minutes  
January 7, 2026  
7023 Cherry Ave., Kewadin, MI 49648

1. Call to Order: Chairman Hefferan, Renis, Standerfer, Warner, Peters, and Merillat.

Members absent: Ford, excused.

Also present: Sara Kopriva and 5 audience members.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Approval of Agenda:

**Motion** by Renis to approve the agenda. Seconded by Warner. **Motion carried.**

4. Approval of Minutes of December 3, 2025:

**Motion** by Warner to approve the minutes dated of December 3, 2025 as presented. Seconded by Hefferan. **Motion carried.**

5. Correspondence: None.

6. Old Business: None.

7. New Business:

A) Election of Officers:

Nominations for Chair: Warner was nominated. No other nominations. Nominations closed.

**Motion** by Hefferan to elect Warner as chair. Seconded by Merillat. **Motion carried.**

Nominations for Vice Chair: Ford was nominated. No other nominations. Nominations closed.

**Motion** by Warner to elect Ford as vice chair. Seconded by Standerfer. **Motion carried.**

Nominations for Secretary: Merillat was nominated. No other nominations. Nominations closed.

**Motion** by Hefferan to elect Merillat as Secretary. Seconded by Warner. **Motion carried.**

B) Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-06: Sections 117.317 and 117.222 RE  
Vacation Rentals:

Warner reviewed the amendment and discussed public hearing procedure. Kopriva gave a history on the amendment. There is no change in the policy. This is just a clarification of the policy and language to conform to the Vacation Rental Ordinance.

Communications received: None.

Those asking questions for information: None.

Those speaking in favor: None.

Those speaking against: None.

Commission Member Comments: None.

**Motion** by Hefferan to recommend approval of ZOA 2025-06 to the Antrim County Planning Commission and Milton Township Board of Trustees. Seconded by Renis **Motion carried.**

C) Sketch Plan Review: SUP 2026-01 SDG LLC Planned Residential Development and Condominium Subdivision. Kopriva gave background on the application. The process is to get feedback on the project. This is a non-binding discussion. There are no motions or decisions to be made.

Jenna Hill Evashevski and Johnathan Lee gave a presentation. Evashevski said this is a proposed 39 units PRD. It is cluster housing to protect the green space and open sky. We intend to create pathways to the conservancy. They provided a conceptual design and walked through that concept. They did review the master plan to accommodate concerns of the township. Lee is the architect and he has shown overview drawings. They have included possible ways to overcome concerns of the community and how to protect green spaces, water, and dark skies. They would also like to replant trees that were previously removed. This design will help people who are looking for single level living and help create housing that is needed in the area.

Hefferan asked regarding the architecture overview. Evashevski discussed the black and white sketch is the inspiration for the types of units. This is conceptual only. Lee worked through the math of the acreage and the density of the homes and open space. They are working on tightening up the placement and numbers.

Warner asked about the .6 acres that are currently zoned AG. Kopriva said we need to determine how it should be included in the calculation. Merrillat said he does not believe that should be included as an Ag zoned parcel. Now it is non-conforming. This could be re-zoned. Kopriva said it cannot be combined because it is in a different section of the county.

Kopriva asked about the amenities regarding what is public and what is private. Lee said there is a community/service type building. There is also storm water treatment capture ponds. We will also have a septic treatment system. Since the village does not have a municipal system, they will create engineered septic treatment plants which we have created and used before. The community building would also need to house the water and septic systems for the project. This is still under determination regarding the use of the building, but it would be for residents only.

Warner asked Kopriva if there is anything presented here that is concerning regarding the use. She said no. Warner and commission members discussed the concept of having the pickleball courts open to the public and how this could cause issues with the condo owners. Warner said having lived here and understanding the Torch River area, he would not open up anything to the public.

Renis asked with this layout, would there be any grading or excavating? Lee said in general, it would 85% stay and 15% adjusted in a way that is manageable for the slopes. They are working to avoid moving earth and to mitigate any erosion.

Hefferan asked Kopriva regarding subdivisions and these are permitted in the village. Why is this not a subdivision? It is under the PRD to get the density. Hefferan asked regarding 1602-A and G. The property was changed dramatically five years ago. How will this fit into that? Kopriva said that is something that needs to be discussed. It has sat there now for five years open. We need to discuss if the development is better than what is currently there.

Renis asked what happened to Torch Lake Terrace Condo? This approval expired. Hefferan asked at what point is this property in its natural state? Hefferan said we have very active waterfront associations in our community and they were involved in the prior proposal and they will look closely at this proposal. Lee said it is not our intention to further damage neighboring properties. We want to get the site stabilized and have native plants and trees brought in. We want it to look and feel like this community. Warner asked regarding the storm water plan? Those can be planted over the top? Yes.

Warner said we really need to look at the AG .6 acres and the allowance to go forward with these plans. Kopriva said yes. If you have major concerns with the proposal or something that should be included, give them that information as they move forward. This is a special use and you will see it a few more times and a public hearing before a decision is made. You are not bound to what you bring up today.

Renis asked regarding the parking. Lee said they will do a road study and this will be refined at that point. Renis said it is a very thoughtful use of the property, but this property was scared. Designing the buildings color white might be very bright rather than blending in with the environment. Lee said these are just early ideas. These can be refined. We realized we are inheriting some bad history, but we want to bring this area forward in a way the community can appreciate the efforts.

Hefferan said he echoed Renis' comments. Kopriva will be able to help these folks. We have heard all of the complaints about this parcel and we should be able to minimize those concerns and provide those to this applicant.

Merillat asked regarding 117.1616-B-8 as to the common buildings being limited to the max size of 1,000 square feet. Kopriva said the Commission will need to look at this when discussing the community center/utility building. Merillat said that only including the non-utility footprint may work but unless we change the ordinance, we could not have a community center over 1,000 square feet. Merillat said we may have the wrong base density (1616-B-3) because you cannot include slopes over 90%. There is quite a lot of that on that parcel. Lee said he will look at that closely. The calculation also cannot include wetlands. Lee said there are not any currently. Merillat said it is not proper to grant a density bonus on land that is otherwise unbuildable. We know they can get 14 because that is what we approved previously. Lee said if we find a 3% number that is a slope, then that takes away from that 75% open space.

D) Bylaw Review: Kopriva said you look at the bylaws every year and it was previously discussed to include putting a cutoff on written public comment. Is there a desire to add in a deadline for this? Renis asked if it can be included in the legal notice. It currently says it will be received until noon the day of the hearing. Merillat said the bylaws we were given are not the current bylaws. We made revisions and approved them on April 21, 2022 which is the last copy he has. We approved them in 2023 without change February 1, 2023 and then approved additional changes on February 7, 2024. Merillat does not have a copy of those. On January 8, 2025 we adopted more changes. Kopriva will research. The most recent version should be January 8, 2025. This will be reviewed again next month.

8. Reports:

A) Zoning Administration Office Report: Provided in the packet.

B) Township Board Report: Renis said they passed the ZO 2025 02 taxes paid prior to permit.

C) ZBA Report: Hefferan: No meeting.

D) Planning Commission Updates: Hefferan asked regarding letting the township board know that Merillat and Warner's terms will expire. Kopriva will review this with the board.

9. Future Meeting Considerations: February 4, 2026. Kopriva discussed possible items on the agenda.

10. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned by order of the chair at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Merillat