

**MARION TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2026 / 7:30PM**

PC MEMBERS PRESENT: JIM ANDERSON – *CHAIRPERSON*
LARRY FILLINGER – *VICE CHAIRPERSON*
CHERYL RANGE – *SECRETARY*
SCOTT LLOYD
BRUCE POWELSON

PC MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE

OTHERS PRESENT: SCOTT RICHARDSON – *ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
ZACH MICHELS – *TOWNSHIP PLANNER*

CALL TO ORDER:

Jim Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

All Planning Commissioners are present.



PUBLIC COMMENT:

Joe Mazur, a township resident, gave compliments to the Planning Commission for their work on the proposed Data Center language. Mr. Mazur expressed a concern about allowing Data Centers in rural residential districts and questioned whether that would be beneficial to Marion Township residents.

Catherin Dyer, a township resident, said she was disappointed in the Township’s proposed chicken ordinance. She thought it was too restrictive and asked for that to be reviewed.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 28, 2026 AGENDA:

Larry Fillinger made a motion to approve the April 28, 2026 agenda as presented. Cheryl Range seconded. **5-0 MOTION CARRIED**

APPROVAL OF MARCH 24, 2026 MINUTES:

Bruce Powelson made a motion to approve the March 24, 2026 Planning Commission minutes as presented. Larry Fillinger seconded. **5-0 MOTION CARRIED**

OLD BUSINESS:

1) DISCUSSION OF HYPER SCALE DATA CENTER ORDINANCE UPDATES

Zach Michels explained that the reason we had to allow Hyper Scale Data Centers in rural residential and industrial is because Marion does not have a lot of industrial zoned areas that could be used for Data Centers. If we excluded rural residential, the State could potentially accuse the Township of being exclusionary.

Zach Michels created language for the Hyper Scale Data Center ordinance, which includes some of the recommendations from the State. The Planning Commissioners and Zach Michels reviewed and made changes to parts of the language from Zach:

APPROVED

OLD BUSINESS: 1) DISCUSSION OF HYPER SCALE DATA CENTER ORDINANCE UPDATES continued:

PAGE 3 / PARAGRAPH 35 / #2

The Planning Commissioners discussed minimum and maximum *total net lot area* sizes and agreed to discuss further after the public hearing concludes.

PAGE 4 / PARAGRAPH 5 / #3

Require landscape screening around the building versus the entire parcel.

PAGE 5 / PARAGRAPH 10 / #6

Update the power generation timeframe to 9am-5pm all year round.

PAGE 5 / PARAGRAPH 30 / #8

Zach Michels is going to create more language on parking lot lighting.

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Changed the setback distance to 500 feet instead of 250 feet.

PAGE 5 / PARAGRAPH 4

Allow a constructed wall around the parcel instead of landscape screening, in light industrial districts.

PAGE 6 / PARAGRAPH 30 / #10

Require a sound check every single year.

Zach Michels suggested keeping language on wildlife in the general ordinance and just reference it in the Data Center ordinance.

PAGE 7 / PARAGRAPH 35 / #13

Require applicant to replace any trees that are removed during the construction process.

PAGE 8 / PARAGRAPH 25 / #14

Require applicant to provide funding for Fire Department training and equipment.

PAGE 9 / PARAGRAPH 5 / #2

Reference Marion Township's Renewable Energy Ordinance.

PAGE 9 / PARAGRAPH 35 / #1

Replace the word "Township" with "Township Engineer, Township Planner and Township Zoning Administrator".

PAGE 12 / PARAGRAPH 30 / #14

Replace "Utility-Scale Solar Energy Facility" with "Data Center".

Jim Anderson asked Zach Michels to have a revised copy of the Hyper Scale Data Center language ready for review at the next Planning Commission meeting. If everything looks good at the May meeting, then Commissioners can schedule a public hearing, make any necessary changes, and submit language to the Livingston County Planning Department for review and comment. Once the LCPD provides feedback, Commissioners can make more changes if needed and recommend approval to the Board of Trustees.

2) DISCUSSION ON CHICKEN ORDINANCE

Zach Michels explained that technically this ordinance would not require the Planning Commission to have a Public Hearing, however the Commissioners would still like to get some feedback from the residents before recommending approval of a chicken ordinance. Therefore, the Commissioners have decided to have a Public Hearing for the chicken ordinance, even though they are not required to have one.

Larry Fillinger made a motion to extend the Planning Commission meeting past 9:30pm. Cheryl Range seconded. **5-0 MOTION CARRIED**

Commissioners discussed various regulations they would like to see in the ordinance. Commissioners decided to continue discussion next month and reschedule the public hearing that was originally scheduled for May 26, 2026 during the last Planning Commission meeting.

Larry Fillinger made a motion to reschedule the May 26, 2026 Public Hearing for Marion Township's Chicken ordinance, to June 23, 2026 at 7:30pm. Bruce Powelson seconded.

Roll Call: Powelson: YES; Range: YES; Fillinger: YES; Anderson: NO; Lloyd: YES **4-1 MOTION CARRIED**

Zach Mickels will prepare two versions of language for the May 26th Planning Commission meeting. In the meantime, Zach Michels recommended that we get a legal opinion on prohibiting roosters, requiring a special-use permit to own chickens, and requiring permission from surrounding neighbors when granting special-use permits for chickens.

3) DISCUSSION ON STORAGE CONTAINER ORDINANCE CHANGES

Commissioners discussed the changes Zach Michels made to the proposed Storage Container ordinance.

Larry Fillinger made a motion to set a public hearing for the Storage Container ordinance on May 26, 2026. Jim Anderson seconded. **5-0 MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business was discussed.

CORRESPONDENCE AND UPDATES:

Commissioners were reminded about the upcoming Township events:

- May 2, 2026: Township Shred Event 10am-1pm
- May 9, 2026: Large Item Collection Event 9am-1pm

Zach Michels discussed new legislative bills being discussed at the State level.

Scott Richardson talked about attending the MTA conference.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Catherine Dyer thanked the Commissioners for their hard work on the Data Center ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT:

Cheryl Range made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 10:36pm. Jim Anderson seconded.

5-0 MOTION CARRIED

MINUTES TAKEN BY: Jessica S. Timberlake