

Keweenaw County Planning Commission
Minutes Regular Meeting
November 10, 2025

Roll Call:

John Parsons, Chair/ Present
Bob Pokorski, Vice Chair/ Present
Don Simila, Secretary/ Present
Margaret Kirby/ Absent

Steven Siira/ Present
Harvey Desnick, ZBA Liaison/ Present
Bob DeMarois, ex officio BOC/ Present
Susan Hockings, ZA/ Present

Called to order by Chair at 4:00

Quorum Present: Yes, 6 members Meeting Posted: Yes

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

Approve Agenda

- M/ Pokorski S/DeMarois Motion carried

Approve October 27, 2025 minutes

- M/ Simila S/Pokorski Motion carried

Guests: None

Public Comments:

- Kathy McEvers requested that the Planning Commission allow for a second public comment period before adjournment or move this comment period to the end of the meeting.
- Mike Waara (Sandpoint Road resident): Expressed concerns about Black Bear Inc.'s planned parking lot construction on Sandpoint Road and questioned the approval/permitting process.
- Eric Campbell (6341 Sandpoint Rd): See attached comment which he read and submitted as a written copy to be included in the record.

ZA Report: Hockings

Reported 20 permits have been issued since the last meeting (15 building, 5 zoning). Noted new expense reporting/coding and reimbursement processes, and requested members omit codes from submitted invoices.

BOC Report: DeMarois

Announced pending bid opening for courthouse building renovations and new security measures (downstairs offices and updated doors).

ZBA Report: Desnick

Discussed recent approval for a variance on Gratiot Lake Rd (Hermanson case). Suggested administrative approvals by the ZA for similar cases with KCRC overview and approval.

New Business:

Zoning Amendments from Eagle Harbor Township: Reviewed amendment to reduce short-term rental cap from 18% to 10%, along with other map amendment proposals. After discussion, a motion was made to send an acknowledgment letter to Eagle Harbor Township stating no objections from Keweenaw County Planning Commission to Eagle Harbor Township's proposed zoning amendments.

- M/Pokorski S/Desnick Motion carried

Planning Commission Terms: ZA reported the following end dates for individual members:

- John Parsons: 12/31/2025
- Harvey Desnick: 12/31/2026
- Steven Siira: 12/31/2026
- Don Simila: 12/31/2026 (term vacated by Barry Koljonen term)
- Bob Pokorski 12/31/2028
- Margaret Kirby: 12/31/2028 (term vacated by Don Yoder)
- Bob DeMarois: 12/31/2028 (runs with 4 year term in office)

Parsons stated he would renew his term at the December meeting but would give up his seat as Chair for the next term. Discussion concerning number of Planning Commission members to be on the December 15th meeting agenda.

Old Business:

Bylaws Review: Simila & DeMarois

Reviewed and updated bylaws draft, including changes in the draft to organizational meeting month (January), conflicts of interest (expanding to neighboring land within 300 feet), membership appointment process, code of conduct/oath consistency, training requirements (4 hours/year), agenda/public comment inclusion, attendance requirements, and quorum definition. Simila will submit an updated draft to the ZA who will prepare for next meeting.

Short-Term Rental Subcommittee: Parsons & Kirby

Tabled for next meeting

Master Plan Update: Pokorski & Parsons

Reviewed recent activities: community input sessions/open houses (5 held, 93 attendees), survey (414 responses), and stakeholder meetings (10 conducted). Vision statement developed (draft available online). Drafting of master plan underway. Master Plan grant: Services invoiced by Pat Coleman (\$10,500.00) plus mileage and per diems from members (\$291.91), \$10,791.90 total reimbursement request to be processed via county board.

Final Comments:

Next meeting: December 15, 2025 at 4:00pm, scheduled guest is Brad Neuman from NMU Extension.

Motion to Adjourn at 4:57pm

- M/ Pokorski S/Desnick Motion carried

Recording Secretary: Susan Hockings _____

Planning Commission Secretary: Donald Simila _____

Attachment: Submitted comments from Eric Campbell

10NOV25

My name is Erik Campbell and I live at 6341 Sand Point Rd. Lac La Belle, MI.

I have recently become aware of a plan by Black Bear, Inc. to construct a commercial use parking lot on Sand Point Rd. Because a **commercial parking lot** will impact traffic, drainage, and nearby residential uses, I respectfully request that a Site Plan Review be completed by the planning committee before a Special Land Use or Conditional Use Permit is approved and a Zoning Permit is issued to construct this commercial parking lot on Sand Point Road.

As stated in the Keweenaw County Zoning Ordinance, a site plan review is required **before a zoning or building permit is issued** if you propose:

- A **commercial parking lot**, even as an accessory use

Please ensure this commercial lot on Sand Point Rd has

- **Parking, loading, and vehicle circulation areas located and designed to maintain appropriate separation from residential uses and configured to preserve the safety and security of neighboring properties**
- **Is safe** for pedestrians and vehicles
- **Has stormwater control** and erosion prevention
- **Mitigates noise, glare, and light**
- **There is Protection of environmentally sensitive areas that are close to this proposed parking lot** (wetlands, shorelines, slopes)

Working with both Black Bear, Inc and the nearby residents on these conditions will be important to build public trust and ensure any proposed construction is developed exactly as shown on any approved plan.