

HARTLAND TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

JULY 10, 2025– 7:00 PM

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fox called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance:**

3. **Roll Call and Recognition of Visitors:**

Present – Commissioners Eckman, Fox, Grissim, Mayer, McMullen (7:15 p.m.) Mitchell, and Murphy
Absent – None

4. **Approval of the Meeting Agenda:**

A Motion to approve the July 10, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Agenda was made by Commissioner Grissom and seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

a. Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2025.

A Motion to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2025, was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Call to the Public:**

None

7. **Public Hearing**

a. Site Plan with Special Land Use Application #25-007 (Automobile Repair – Minor) at 9990 Highland Road

Chair Fox explained the process and opened the Public Hearing at 7:03 PM stating all public notice requirements have been met.

Director Langer stated the following:

- Gave an overview of the location of the project.
- West on M-59, west of Old US 23, just past the shared entrance to Charyl Stockwell Academy.
- Zoned General Commercial (GC).
- Owned by LaFontaine for a number of years.
- The Applicant is proposing to purchase the property and use it for minor automotive repairs.
- Major repairs would include a body shop, automotive painting; minor repairs would include oil changes, mufflers, tire replacement, items related to the mechanical maintenance of a car.
- Automotive Repair – Minor, is permitted in GC by Special Land Use Permit (SUP).
- An SUP requires a Public Hearing with a recommendation from the Planning Commission with final approval from the Township Board. The Planning Commission will approve the Site Plan portion of the request.

The Applicant, Joesph Mazure, stated the they operate this type of business in other areas and feel this is an area with a need.

Call to the Public

None

Chair Fox closed the Public Hearing at 7:07 PM.

Chair Fox referred to the staff memorandum dated July 3, 2025.

SPECIAL LAND USE REVIEW – General Standards

Chair Fox stated the Applicant provided a written response and the Planning Staff also believes they meet that criteria.

SPECIAL LAND USE REVIEW – Applicable Site Standards

Layout

Director Langer referred to the site plan and described the layout. The Applicant is not proposing any changes to the building at this time. The Applicant has designated certain portions of the parking lot for various uses.

Outdoor Display

Chair Fox stated none is permitted and the Applicant has been made aware.

Outdoor Storage

Chair Fox stated the Applicant is aware of the requirements.

Screening

Chair Fox stated this would be discussed under Landscaping.

Ground Water Protection

Chair Fox stated a Pollution Incidence Protection Plan (PIPP) is required and the Applicant is aware.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – Applicable Site Standards

Off-Street Parking (Sec. 5.8.4.H – Automobile Repair – Minor)

Director Langer stated the following:

- Large parking area but previous uses did not designate parking spaces, there is no striping.
- In speaking with the Applicant, using information from other locations, staff feels there is enough parking.
- The Applicant will need to submit a Parking Plan with the Land Use Permit.

Commissioner Grissim asked if the Applicant is aware of the end cap requirements for parking. The Applicant confirmed they are and will submit a Parking Plan detailing those items.

Barrier-Free Parking

Chair Fox stated this will be part of the Parking Plan. Five barrier-free spaces seems like a lot. Director Langer stated it is a ratio based on the total number of parking spaces. Staff is using 105

parking spaces for that calculation. They will work with the Applicant. They are generally supposed to be close to the entrance of the building.

Landscaping and Screening (Sec. 5.11)

Director Langer stated the following:

- The Applicant noted he intended to keep the existing landscaping intact.
- Consensus of the Site Plan Review Committee was that the three (3) existing parking pads along the north side of the parking lot should be removed,
- An evergreen hedge row should be installed along the north side of the parking area, using three-foot tall yews and the applicable Ordinance standards for parking lot screening.
- Revised Landscape Plan to be submitted along with the Land Use Permit.

Commissioner Grissim stated the area along the Charyl Stockwell access will need something too, she will work with the Applicant.

Water Supply and Wastewater Disposal (Sec. 5.16)

Chair Fox stated the site is served by municipal water and sanitary sewer.

Commissioner Mayer confirmed the Applicant will move the dumpster behind the building. The Applicant concurred. Commissioner Mayer asked about the dumpster enclosure. The Applicant stated he intends to comply with the Ordinance but would like to get the business up and running first. He anticipates coming back to the Planning Commission for a building addition in the near future and would like to do the dumpster enclosure at that time. Commissioner Mayer asked if part of this business will be Used Car Sales. The Applicant stated it will not.

Commissioner Eckman offered the following Motion:

Move to recommend approval of Special Land Use Permit and approve Site Plan Application #25-007, a request to establish an Automobile Repair (Minor) facility in an existing building at 9990 Highland Road in Section 29 of the Township (Tax Parcel ID #4708-29-200-017) as outlined in the staff report dated July 3, 2025.

The recommendation for approval is based on the following findings:

- 1. The proposed special land use, Automobile Repair (Minor) meets the intent and purposes of the Ordinance as well as the specific standards outlined in Section 6.6 (Special Uses).**
- 2. The proposed special land use is permitted in the GC (General Commercial) zoning district, as outlined in Section 3.1.14.D.xix, and the proposed use is compatible with the existing uses in the vicinity.**
- 3. The proposed use will be served by public water and sanitary sewer, by existing essential facilities and public services, and the Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority has no objection.**
- 4. The proposed use will be served by private shared driveway with direct access to Highland Road.**
- 5. The proposed use will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities as the proposed site will be served by public water and sanitary sewer.**

Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. **The proposed special land use, Automobile Repair (Minor), is subject to approval by the Township Board.**
2. **The applicant shall adequately address the outstanding items noted in the Planning Department's memorandum, dated July 3, 2025, on the plans submitted with a land use permit application, subject to an administrative review by the Planning staff prior to the issuance of a land use permit.**
3. **A land use permit is required after approval of the Site Plan and Special Use Permit.**
4. **Applicant complies with any requirements of the Department of Public Works Director, Township Engineering Consultant (SDA), Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority, and all other government agencies, as applicable.**

Seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Old and New Business

- a. **Site Plan Application SP/PD #25-010 Highland Road Self Storage Planned Development Final Plan**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Gave an overview of the location of the project.
- Vacant lot located West of US 23, North of M-59 between Arby's and Best Western.
- Applicant has requested and Planned Development (PD) for a climate controlled self-storage facility.
- Approval of a Planned Development is a three-step process. A Concept Plan, Preliminary Plan, and Final Plan are all reviewed by the Planning Commission and the Township Board, with the Planning Commission making a recommendation and the Board having final approval at each step.
- This is the Final PD Approval step which is ultimately a rezoning of the property from GC to PD and involves the review of the legal documents.
- Tonight, the Planning Commission will offer a recommendation, and the request will go to the Township Board for final approval.

Easements

Chair Fox stated the Applicant is working on them and agrees they are needed. The Applicant, Joe Qonja, stated they are trying to come to an agreement with Arby's, the only parcel not under his family's control. If one cannot be reached, they will continue to maintain the easement as they have done in the past.

Planned Unit Development Agreement

The Planning Commission made no comments.

Rezoning of the Subject Property

The Planning Commission had no comments or questions.

Commissioner Mitchell offered the following Motion:

Move to recommend approval of Site Plan Application #25-010, the Final Planned Development Site Plan for Highland Road Self Storage Planned Development as outlined in the staff memorandum dated July 3, 2025.

Approval is subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The Final Planned Development Site Plan for the Highland Road Self Storage Planned Development, SP/PD Application #25-010, is subject to the approval of the Township Board.**
- 2. Final approval of the Highland Road Self Storage Planned Development (SP/PD Application #25-010) shall require an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to revise the zoning map and designate the subject property as PD (Planned Development). The subject property, which constitutes the planned development project area (approximately 1.21 acres), and which is to be rezoned to PD, is as follows:**
 - a. Tax Parcel ID #4708-21-300-039 (approximately 1.21 acres in area); currently zoned GC (General Commercial)**
- 3. Waiver request for the planned development project area to be less than 20 acres is approved.**
- 4. Waiver request for the building height to exceed 35 feet is approved.**
- 5. Waiver request for one (1) wall sign on a side of the building that is not the building wall's primary entrance (south elevation) is approved.**
- 6. The applicant shall adequately address the outstanding items noted in the Planning Department's memorandum, dated July 3, 2025, on the Construction Plan Set, subject to an administrative review by Planning staff prior to the issuance of a land use permit.**
- 7. As part of the Final Plan Review, the applicant shall provide a Planned Development (PD) Agreement that includes any access and maintenance agreements. The documents shall be in a recordable format and shall comply with the requirements of the Township Attorney.**
- 8. Applicant complies with any requirements of the Township Engineering Consultant, Department of Public Works Director, Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority, and all other government agencies, as applicable.**

Seconded by Commissioner Mayer. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Site Plan Application SP/PD #25-011 Urban Air Adventure Park Planned Development Concept Plan**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Gave an overview of the location of the project.
- South of M-59, west of US-23, and east of Old US-23, accessed from Old US 23.

- Tonight is the Planned Development Conceptual Review; the Planning Commission will offer comments only, no recommendation.
- Proposing a 38,400 square foot indoor adventure park for children.
- There are other facilities in southeast Michigan.
- Eastern portion of the site contains a wetland which they are avoiding.
- Have an easement for access and to connect their parking area to the property to the west.
- Colors displayed on the elevations are to show percentages of building materials, not indicative of the proposed colors of materials.

The Applicant, Nathanael Sumner, and Kevin Johnson, President and CEO of Rhodes & Johnson; introduced themselves and stated the following:

- Chose Hartland because of its location, they have family here, they know and like the area.
- Area can use an indoor place for children to be active and get off of their tablets.
- Location is excellent for visibility from US 23.
- Local builder in Fenton, prepared the elevations, glad to be part of this project.

Proposed Concept Plan

General

Chair Fox stated the following:

- Proposing a 38,400 square-foot building.
- 700 to 900 occupants.
- General Commercial (GC) zoned parcel.
- Minimum acreage for a Planned Development (PD) is 20 acres, there are many in the community that are smaller.
- Showing 164 parking spaces.
- Slightly over the 35-foot height limit, 36.5 feet. There are others that have exceeded that limit.

Chair Fox asked about building materials. The Applicant stated the following:

- Masonry with wood veneer panels to break up the façade so it does not look like a warehouse.
- Seamed metal panel system and smooth metal panel system to create interest and color.
- Entry is glass (windows on east elevation and at main entrance) to add some light.

Chair Fox asked if the Planning Commission approves the four large silhouettes of children on the building. Commissioner Eckman asked if they would be considered signage.

Director Langer stated the following:

- This is a gray area, discussed at length during the Site Plan Review (SPR) process.
- Architect was present for the Site Plan Review Committee meeting and stated these are not necessarily an Urban Air design feature, but were proposed to add a youthful, kids activity look and feel. They are intended to be illuminated from behind.
- Standard zoning might not permit them but if they utilized the Planned Development approval process, those items are left to the discretion of the Planning Commission and the Township Board as part of the give and take in the PD process.

Commissioner Mitchell stated he was in the SPR meeting and does not view the silhouettes as signage. He supports that design element.

The Planning Commission briefly discussed the silhouettes.

- Concerned about setting a precedent.
- Had to use the PD process, that element would not be permitted otherwise.
- Silhouettes are an artistic way to differentiate the building from a warehouse.
- PDs are “give and get.” It is a big “get” to have a facility like this in Hartland, and a small “give” on the part of the Township.
- Planning Director was concerned as he views them as signs but will support whatever the Planning Commission decides.
- Looking at the project as a whole package.
- Silhouettes will be backlit.
- Urban Air typically utilizes existing buildings.
- This store will be a flagship store for this brand, a dedicated spot designed for this purpose which is one of the attractions of Hartland and this site, to be able to create a store with great visibility from the highway.
- Will be one of the nicer Urban Air Parks.
- Façade of the structure is designed to add interest and generate excitement.

Generally, the Planning Commission approves of the silhouette design feature.

Signage

Director Langer stated the following:

- On the east façade facing the highway is a wall sign.
- On the opposite side is a sign with the Urban Air logo.
- Sign Ordinance limits panel signs to ten (10) square feet.
- No dimensions were included for any of the signs.
- South elevation has a sign near the entrance.
- The Sign Ordinance permits one sign on the east and one on the west where there is a road frontage.
- Once calculated they may meet the size for the signs they are proposing but they are asking for three, possibly not all in locations that would normally be permitted.
- Requesting a sign on the east side, a sign on the south side, and a logo sign on the west side.

The Planning Commission agreed to the proposed signs shown.

The Applicant mentioned the Fire Department requires a sign with an address so there may be a monument sign near the access drive entrance. The Planning Director stated the Planning Commission should be prepared to see a possible off-site monument sign at the Preliminary approval level.

Chair Fox mentioned if there are any rooftop units, they will have to be screened.

Proposed Density

Chair Fox stated density is not applicable.

Public Road Access

Chair Fox restated there are two (2) access drives to Old US 23.

Traffic Generation

Chair Fox stated the Applicant will need to submit a traffic analysis prior to the Preliminary Site Plan review.

Commissioner Murphy asked where the traffic would mostly be entering the site. The Applicant stated the south side. There is also a service drive connection to Hartland Town Center that further connects to Fountain Square.

Internal Vehicular/Pedestrian Circulation

Chair Fox stated there is a sidewalk on three sides of the building and a parking area, they should have good access.

Utilities

Chair Fox stated the applicant will need to work with the Hartland Township Public Works Department to acquire the necessary Residential Equivalent Units (REUs) for this development.

Design Details

Chair Fox stated a Pattern Book will not be required as this is a single structure.

Open Space

Chair Fox stated Open Space will need to be shown on the Preliminary Plan.

Landscaping

Chair Fox stated a Landscaping Plan will be required.

Dumpster and Enclosure

Chair Fox stated it will need to match the building.

Exterior Lighting

Chair Fox stated a Lighting Plan will be required as part of the Preliminary Site Plan application.

Recognizable Benefits

Chair Fox stated there is information on page 5 of the staff report.

Other

Director Langer stated the Applicant has a crosshatch in the parking area of which there have been discussions. The Applicant is concerned about the turning radius for the fire truck; our response has been to make it a landscape island or bring it in to reduce its dimensions. The portion where the dumpster is planned could be a partial landscape island. There may also be some landscaping that is technically offsite around the borders of the property.

Commissioner Murphy asked about providing bike racks. The Applicant stated they have been thinking about that as well. Commissioner Murphy also suggested a sidewalk from Old US 23 as a recognizable benefit.

Planning Commission Comments

Commissioner Mitchell thinks this idea is an exciting asset to Hartland Township. He applauds the Applicant for bringing it forward and believes the Township Board will encourage them as much as possible to succeed in this endeavor.

Commissioner Mayer thinks it is a good fit for that piece of property. It would be tough to get other things there. He thinks the Applicant did a great job with the elevations taking what is basically an industrial building and making it appealing.

Commissioner Grissim stated she feels the same and is jealous she is not able to participate. It looks like it is really fun. The Applicant is hitting all of the marks and Hartland is lucky.

Commissioner Murphy said he agrees with the other Commissioners. It was exciting when Emagine came to Hartland, a big deal. This is a new and interesting project. He likes the idea of providing another option for kids to get outside away from screen time and it is unique. Hopefully, it all works out.

Commissioner Eckman said he cannot add much to what has been said. The uniqueness is pretty impressive. He does not think there is anything like this in Livingston County. It is a nice addition, to be able to see it from US 23 with such a positive elevation as opposed to seeing an RV place. It will be a great asset.

Commissioner McMullen stated she agrees with all of the comments. She likes the design of the building, and she would call the silhouettes of the children artwork.

Chair Fox said he thinks it is a great project. It is going to be a wonderful addition to the community. The Applicant has done a beautiful job with it, and he looks forward to seeing them back soon.

Commissioner Mayer asked how many are open nationwide. The Applicant replied about 200. Commissioner Mayer asked about the success rate. The Applicant stated none of them are closed.

Commissioner Murphy asked if they typically repurposed big box stores that have closed. The Applicant agreed stating he believes they will be only the third to have a new build.

9. Call to the Public:

None

10. Planner Report:

Director Langer reported the following:

- The Ordinance Review Committee is busy looking at an ordinance to modify the use of backyard chickens; they have dug into that topic deep. They have had a couple of meetings but there still is a little way to go.
- Urban Air is scheduled to go to the Township Board next Tuesday and will be back before the Planning Commission for the Preliminary Review at the second meeting in July. Staff has been reviewing the Preliminary Plans almost at the same time as the Conceptual. The noticing has already been done so it is set for that meeting.

11. Committee Reports:

None

12. Adjournment:

A Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Eckman and seconded by Commissioner McMullen. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:58 PM.

Submitted by.



Tom Murphy
Planning Commission Secretary