CITY OF ISHPEMING PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, August 10, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER
The regular meeting of the Ishpeming Planning Commission was called to order in the Council Chambers at City Hall by Member Mike Elliott at 6:00pm on Monday, August 10, 2026.

B. ROLL CALL
Present: Dax Richer, Jennifer Morrow, Stefani Vargas, Mike Elliott, Cory Richards, Todd Prillwitz. (6). Absent: Brooke Routhier, Matt Loos, and City Council Representative, Jason Chapman. (3). No vacant seats (0). Also, present was Andrew Duerfeldt, Zoning Administrator (ZA), Lexi Hart, Account DPW Clerk/ Deputy Clerk, and Emilie Stack, City Clerk.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT – Amy Lerlie, 725 N. 1st Street, spoke regarding the duplex she owns at 404 S. 3rd Street. She stated that she was unaware the duplex was classified as a Class B non-conforming use and had been preparing to have a family move into the property when its Class B status was brought to her attention. Mrs. Lerlie requested that the Commission consider the circumstances and approve the duplex as a Class A non-conforming use.

Public comments were closed at 6:01pm.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
A motion was made by Member Richer, seconded by Member Elliott, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as amended. The amendment included the addition of Item H (5), Habitat for Humanity Discussion, under New or Continuing Business.

E. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES
A motion was made by Member Prillwitz, seconded by Member Richards, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of 5/4/2026, 6/1/2026, and 7/6/2026 as presented.

F. PRESENTATIONS
There was none.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. RZ 2026-01: To rezone a parcel in the (DD) Deferred Development zoning district to the (MR) Multiple Residential zoning district
Zoning Administrator, Andrew Duerfeldt provided a brief overview of the findings and facts related to the proposed rezoning. He explained that the property was previously split-zoned and that the rezoning would fully designate the parcel as Multiple Residential, allowing for residential development at the site.

There was no public comment, and the public hearing was closed at 6:08 p.m.

A motion was made by Member Richards, seconded by Member Richer, to discuss RZ 2026-01 as presented. The Commission engaged in a brief discussion regarding the request and noted that the proposed rezoning aligns with the Future Land Use Map and the goals outlined in the 2022-2027 Master Plan.

A motion was then made by Member Vargas, seconded by Member Richer, and carried unanimously to approve RZ 2026-01 as presented.

2. ZTA 2026-01: To change name, permitted and conditional uses of Section 17.0 (DD) Deferred Development zoning district.
The public hearing was opened at 6:13 p.m. There was no public comment. The public hearing was closed at 6:13 p.m.

A motion was made by Member Richards, seconded by Member Vargas, and carried unanimously to approve ZTA 2026-01. Discussion was then opened.

Zoning Administrator, Andrew Duerfeldt reviewed the facts and findings for consideration of the proposed zoning text amendment. The Commission engaged in a brief discussion regarding the amendment. Following discussion, the motion to approve ZTA 2026-01 passed. All ayes. Zero Nays.

3. ZTA 2026-02: To add minimum lot width to the (DD) Deferred Development zoning district
The public hearing was opened at 6:18 p.m. There was no public comment. The public hearing was closed at 6:18 p.m.

Zoning Administrator Andrew Duerfeldt provided an overview of ZTA 2026-02. He explained that the proposed text amendment is intended to be compatible with ZTA 2026-01, which had been approved earlier in the meeting. He stated that establishing a minimum lot width of 100ft would help preserve areas for conservation and recreational use by ensuring compatibility with the conservation/recreation district.

A motion was made by Member Vargas, seconded by Member Prillwitz, to approve ZTA 2026-02 as presented. The motion passed unanimously, with all members voting aye and no members voting nay.

4. ZTA 2026-03: To add Manufactured housing Communities to Section 12.3.M. as a conditional use in the (MR) Multiple Residential zoning district
The public hearing was opened at 6:21 p.m. There was no public comment. The public hearing was closed at 6:21 p.m.

A motion was made by Member Vargas, seconded by Member Richards, to approve ZTA 2026-03 as presented.

Zoning Administrator, Andrew Duerfeldt reviewed the facts and findings related to the proposed text amendment. The Commission discussed the location and language pertaining to manufactured housing. Mr. Duerfeldt stated that the proposed language is non-exclusionary and noted that additional language could be added in the future if necessary. It was also noted that a separate zoning district exists for mobile homes.

The motion was put to a vote and passed unanimously, with all members voting aye and no members voting nay.

5. CU 2026-02: To permit a membership organization in the (GR) General Residential District
The public hearing was opened at 6:30 p.m. There was no public comment. The public hearing was closed at 6:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Member Richer, seconded by Member Vargas, to approve CU 2026-02 as presented.

Zoning Administrator, Andrew Duerfeldt reviewed the findings and facts related to the conditional use permit request for the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). He explained that the previous VFW building had collapsed

and that the organization is seeking to relocate to the Trinity Lutheran Church building. The request involves a change of use for the existing building, as the VFW does not intend to rebuild its former facility.

The Commission discussed CU 2026-02, with concerns raised regarding the presence of a bar and alcohol service within a residential neighborhood. It was noted that all surrounding property owners had been notified of the request and that no comments or objections had been received.

The Commission also reviewed parking requirements. Private clubs and lodges are required to provide one parking space for every 120 square feet of usable area. Based on this standard, the VFW would be required to provide approximately 71 parking spaces. The subject parcel can accommodate approximately 10 parking spaces. While the parking requirements are not met on-site, it was noted that neighboring properties could potentially be utilized for additional parking if necessary.

The motion was put to a vote and passed unanimously, with all members voting aye and no members voting nay.

6. NCU 2026-02: To permit a Class A non-conforming structure in the (GR) General Residential District
The public hearing was opened at 6:48 p.m.

Amy Lerlie, 725 N. 1st Street, spoke regarding her duplex located at 404 S. 3rd Street. She stated that she recently learned the property is classified as a Class B non-conforming structure. Ms. Lerlie explained that she was unaware of this designation until she was preparing to close on the property and was subsequently required to cancel the closing. She requested that the Commission designate the property as a Class A non-conforming structure.

The public hearing was closed at 6:50 p.m.

A motion was made by Member Richer, seconded by Member Morrow, to approve NCU 2026-02 as presented.

Zoning Administrator Andrew Duerfeldt provided an overview of the request. He explained that a Class B non-conforming use or structure is one that no longer conforms to the current zoning ordinance, although it may have been permitted under previous zoning regulations. He further explained that a Class B non-conforming structure generally cannot be rebuilt in its current form if destroyed and is limited to repairs and maintenance of the existing structure. He noted that redesignating the property as a Class A non-conforming structure would allow it to be rebuilt in accordance with the provisions applicable to Class A non-conforming uses and structures.

Member Elliott stated that redesignating the structure from a Class B non-conforming structure to a Class A non-conforming structure would be consistent with the goals outlined in the 2022-2027 Master Plan.

The motion was put to a vote and passed unanimously, with all members voting aye and no members voting nay.

H. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

1. Vice Chair to succeed to the office of chair: select office of vice-chair for remainder of unexpired term
It was announced that Planning Commission Chair, Brooke Routhier, was unable to continue serving in her position, resulting in a need for a Chairperson and Vice Chair.

The Commission agreed to appoint Member Mike Elliott as Chairperson. Member Stefani Vargas volunteered to serve as Vice Chair for the remainder of the term.

The proposed changes were put to a vote and approved unanimously, with all members voting aye and no members voting nay.

2. Discuss: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance

Zoning Administrator Andrew Duerfeldt stated that the proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance, Ordinance No. 8-100, has been under review by the Planning Commission for more than a year. He presented the most recent revised version, which had already been reviewed by the City Attorney. The Commission was asked to discuss and review the proposed revisions before forwarding the ordinance back to the City Attorney for further review.

Mr. Duerfeldt explained that the proposed addition is intended to be compatible with the Short-Term Rental Ordinance recently adopted by the City Council. He noted that the Short-Term Rental Ordinance applies to rentals of 30 days or less, whereas the proposed ADU Ordinance would only permit occupancy periods of 30 days or more.

Mr. Duerfeldt also reviewed several revisions included in the proposal. These revisions include changes to maximum yard coverage requirements and a requirement that ADUs comply with the rear yard occupancy standards of the applicable zoning district. In addition, one parking space must be provided for an ADU in a driveway, side yard, or rear yard. Applicants may also request a waiver of residential parking requirements, allowing for the possibility of no additional parking if approved.

Following discussion, the Commission reached a consensus to forward the revised version of the proposed addition to Ordinance No. 8-100 to the City Attorney for further review.

3. Review: 2026 Master Plan Goals

Member Elliott read through the handout of the listed 2026 Planning Commission Goals. There was quick discussion of the listed goals. Items (5.) Wetland/Green Space Zoning: Evaluate, (7.) General Commercial/US-41 Corridor Commercial/Highway Access: Develop, and (10.) Washington St. Industrial Zoning: Evaluate to be added to the September 14th Planning Commission meeting agenda.

4. Discuss: City Property Potential Housing Sites

Zoning administrator, Andrew Duerfeldt, provided a list of vacant lots and parcel ownerships for potential housing sites. Some of the vacant lots may be possible parks, and the commission agreed that they will have to further investigate. It was also noted that the list identifies parcels that are legally buildable based on ownership and zoning considerations; however, it does not determine whether the parcels are physically buildable.

5. Habitat for Humanity Discussion

Member Vargas shared insights based on her experience with Habitat for Humanity housing projects. She noted that duplexes constructed in the Marquette area were not as popular as anticipated. As a result, Habitat for Humanity is considering the development of townhomes within the City of Ishpeming, as they believe townhomes may be more marketable and better received than duplexes.

The commission didn't realize they had until 8:00pm for their meeting. With time remaining, the commission decided to jump back to item H (3). Discussion took place on more items listed on the 2026 Planning Commission Goals. The Commission discussed the Youth Liaison position. Members noted that several

individuals had expressed interest in serving as Youth Liaison. The Commission agreed that the City should contact the local school to determine whether there are additional students interested in the position.

The Commission also discussed establishing a Senior Center Liaison position for the Planning Commission. Member Morrow indicated that she may be willing to serve in that role, noting that she is a member of the Senior Center, has the ability to communicate with the Senior Center Director, and could report relevant information back to the Planning Commission.

Additional discussion regarding the 2026 Planning Commission goals followed.

I. OLD BUSINESS – There was none.

J. CORRESPONDENCE – There was none.

ADJOURNMENT
At 8:06 p.m. a motion was made by Member Richer, supported by Member Vargas and carried unanimously to adjourn.

Prepared by:

Lexi Hart, DPW Clerk/Deputy Clerk

Andrew Duerfeldt, Zoning Administrator

Dax Richer, Secretary