

MINUTES

DRAFT

**THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
THOMAS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
8215 SHIELDS DRIVE, SAGINAW, MICHIGAN
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026, 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: R. Iamurri, S. Garvie, D. Bird, J. Curry, P. Lynch, S. Yockey, and K. McDonald
Absent: None
Others Present: D. Sommers, Thomas Township Supervisor
D. Sika, Community Development Director
A. Bicigo, Code Enforcement Officer/Planning Assistant
3 Interested Parties

Iamurri called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Lynch, supported by Yockey to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE 7 YEAS 0 NAYS 0 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Garvie, supported by Yockey to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2026 meeting.

VOTE 7 YEAS 0 NAYS 0 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Hearings:

A. Text Amendment – Tech Park Data Center Ordinance

Iamurri opened the Public Hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Sika presented a proposed text amendment to redefine “Data Centers” and to make them a Use by Special Permit to be allowed in the Great Lakes Tech Park Overlay Zone. He explained that the decibel level should be changed to reflect the same maximum noise level of 60 decibels (dB) that is listed for the rest of the Tech Park Overlay. McDonald suggested that generator testing hours should be restricted to Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Iamurri opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Iamurri closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

Motion by Garvie, supported by Yockey to approve the proposed text amendment with the following modifications:

1. Change the maximum sound level from 65 dBA $L_{eq(1h)}$ to 60 decibels (dB) to match the existing sound level restriction found in the Great Lakes Tech Park Overlay Zone Ordinance.
2. Change the generator testing hours from “sunrise to sunset” to “8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.)

Presentations:

A. Site Plan Review – Taco Bell

Kirsten Amos of GPD Group presented a site plan for the Taco Bell at 8030 Gratiot Rd to be demolished and rebuilt following the newest Taco Bell design scheme. The main layout of the property will remain the same, with the footprint of the building only changing slightly. She explained that the parking lot will be resurfaced and restriped, the existing landscaping will remain, and the stone pillars and fencing will be added as required.

Motion by Yockey, supported by Curry to approve the proposed site plan to demolish and rebuild the Taco Bell at 8030 Gratiot Rd.

VOTE 7 YEAS 0 NAYS 0 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Sign Board of Appeals:

A. Variance Request – Taco Bell

Iamurri opened the public hearing at 7:18 p.m.

Amos explained that the first variance request is to keep the existing pole sign in the current location, which is 7 feet too close to the road right of way. Their concern is that, with the current site layout, moving the sign would cause visual obstruction and negatively affect traffic flow, and would also require removal of an existing mature tree. Garvie questioned the height of the building. Josh Graber explained that the height of the parapet is 20 feet, which should be at or below the height of the current building. Amos also explained that they are requesting a variance to allow an additional 30 square feet of wall signage, to be used across three wall signs. She explained that the ordinance would allow additional pole signs based on their road frontage. However, due to the existing landscaping and a gas line near the north property line, there is no room to place the additional signs that they would normally be allowed. Sika explained that they would normally be allowed three pole signs, and that in the past businesses have been allowed additional wall signage in lieu of additional pole signs.

Iamurri opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Iamurri closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

Motion by Yockey, supported by Curry, to approve the following variances for 8030 Gratiot Rd, based on the fact that the existing parking lot layout, existing landscaping and mature trees, and the gas line near the north property line would prevent relocation of the existing pole sign and the installation of any additional pole or ground signs:

1. A variance of 7 feet to the required sign setback of 10 feet from the road right of way, to allow the existing pole sign location to remain unchanged.
2. A variance to the number of wall signs allowed, to allow one additional wall sign in lieu of any additional pole/ground signs.

3. A variance to allow an additional 30 square feet of wall signage in lieu of any additional pole/ground signs.

VOTE 7 YEAS 0 NAYS 0 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Adjournment:

Motion by Yockey, supported by Lynch to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

VOTE 7 YEAS 0 NAYS 0 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED