

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, July 28, 2026
6:30 p.m.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Elizabeth El-Assadi, Chair
Bill Sinkule, Vice Chair
Darrell Kirby, Secretary
Gloria Peterson
Amy Kehrler
Crystal Lecoq

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Mark Yandrick, Planning Director

- **CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM**

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. A quorum was present.

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Kirby made the motion to approval, Commissioner Sinkule seconded the motion. Approved 6-0.

- **APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 23, 2026, PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES AND THE JULY 14, 2026, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

- Commissioner Kirby made the motion to approval, of the June 23rd work session minutes. Commissioner Sinkule seconded the motion. **Approved 6-0.**
- Commissioner Peterson made the motion to approval, of the July 14 regular meeting minutes with the added statement that “Commissioner Peterson had an approved absence due to another Committee meeting at the same time” Commissioner Kehrler seconded the motion. **Approved 6-0.**

- **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**CONDITIONAL REZONING – 8061 MERRITT RD – TO CONSIDER THE
CONDITIONAL REZONING FROM R-3, ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TO
ADD THE AG, AGRICULTURAL OVERLAY**

The Planning Staff noted that the overlay does not have bulk regulations, such as setback maximums and building heights, and instead focuses more on uses. The conditions often limit the rezoning to specific uses or include other limitations on the effect of the proposed future development on the site. The ordinance only allowed the applicant to offer the conditions, and the Planning Commission and Township Board could not impose additional conditions. Applicants could consider suggested conditions, but if they were not accepted, the Township Board had to use only the offered conditions when making a decision.

The purpose of the proposal was to establish a plant nursery on the site. The Planning Staff referenced a map. There were existing wetlands primarily at the back of the property. There was a whole barn that had been present for some time. There were areas of plants that were proposed to be harvested.

The applicant's voluntary conditions included that if the rezoning was granted, it would exclude future uses that require Planning Commission and Township Board approval unless a rezoning removed the exclusion; it excluded public riding, boarding stables, recreation centers, and swimming pools, and the products to be sold would be picked up only between dawn and dusk.

The Township defined a permanent greenhouse as a building used for wholesale or commercial purposes, constructed of permanent or temporary framing with a transparent material, set directly on the ground, and used to grow plants. If the conditional rezoning was approved, the applicant would have to return with a site plan. If the greenhouse was erected in the future, the applicant would need to revise the site plan.

The Township had ordinances regarding the storage of potentially hazardous materials, and applicants were required to follow all state and federal regulations. The applicant needed to address the Planning Commission regarding the prerequisite Michigan pesticide certifications.

The applicant should address adherence to Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requirements for wetland registration and related practices. There were setback regulations for wetlands, but no full plan to respond at the staff level.

The applicant should address any plans to protect the existing wetland area from water runoff or pesticide drift from the proposed nursery operation. The applicant should address plans for compost or disposal of dead or diseased plant materials at the site, since large-scale wood chipping, shredding, or composting of non-plant materials could raise concerns about noise and odors.

The Planning Staff presented the location map, which showed the adjacent map. There were no known agriculture operations on the site, and it had been in its current form for many years. The only noticeable change was the change from grass to dirt in the front area. The wetlands map was presented, which demonstrated that it comprised the back 40-50% of the property.

The Planning Staff reviewed the Agricultural Zone permitted uses and the zoning criteria:

1. Consistency with the goals, policies, and future land use map of the Charter Township of Ypsilanti Master Plan, including any sub-area or corridor plans. If conditions have changed since the master plan was adopted, the rezoning may be found to be consistent with recent development trends in the area.
2. Compatibility of the site's physical, geological, hydrological, and other environmental features with all uses permitted in the proposed zoning district compared to uses permitted under current zoning.
3. The compatibility of all uses permitted in the proposed zoning district with surrounding uses and zoning in terms of land suitability, environmental impacts, density, nature of use, traffic impacts, aesthetics, infrastructure, and potential influence on property values, compared to uses permitted under current zoning.
4. The capacity of Township utilities and services is sufficient to accommodate all the uses permitted in the requested district without compromising the health, safety, and welfare of the Township.
5. The capacity of the street system to safely and efficiently accommodate the expected traffic generated by uses permitted in the requested zoning district.

6. The apparent demand for the types of uses permitted in the requested zoning district in the Township and surrounding area, in relation to the amount of land in the Township and surrounding area, is currently zoned and available to accommodate the demand.
7. The boundaries of the requested zoning district are sufficient to meet the dimensional regulations for the zoning district listed in Article IV, Schedule of Regulations.
8. The requested zoning district shall be more appropriate from the Township's perspective than another zoning district.
9. The requested rezoning will not create an isolated and unplanned spot zone.
10. The request has not previously been submitted within the past one (1) year, unless conditions have changed, or new information has been provided.
11. Other criteria as determined by the Planning Commission or Township Board which would protect the health and safety of the public, protect public and private investment in the Township, and enhance the overall quality of life in Charter Township of Ypsilanti.

The Planning Staff reviewed their comments on whether or not the standards were met:

1. The site is designated in the Master Plan for "Agricultural Preservation." The vision for Agricultural Preservation includes nurseries and greenhouses, and natural feature preservation. However, the proposed site is only five acres (with 2.1 acres occupied by a regulated wetland), while the Master Plan calls for properties of 10-30+ acres for this designation. Also, the Design Criteria call for new land uses being served by infrastructure. The applicant states that no water or sanitary facilities are proposed. In our view, this is inconsistent with the Master Plan.
2. Compatibility of this site's physical features, including 2.1 acres of wetlands, natural feature setbacks, and its adjacency to residentially zoned parcels, limits the available land for a viable nursery and makes it challenging for customers to visit the site. Also, if the properties to the east and west of the subject site were developed in compliance with R-3 (single-family homes), a commercial operation could impact the residential neighbors.
3. Compared to the residential uses allowed in R-3 (current zoning), and given the site's limitations, this property could accommodate one or two single-family homes. Situating a single-family home on this site would also be consistent with other uses in the vicinity.

4. The applicant is "conditioning" their rezoning request on limiting the uses allowed.
5. Regarding availability of public utilities, the applicant states that there will be no water or sanitary facilities on site. Regarding delivery of plants or other materials to the nursery (such as mulch, compost, potting mix, etc.), the applicant's response states that large semi-trailer trucks will not be necessary and that all deliveries will be made in a UPS-style delivery truck. Larger dump trucks will be needed to deliver bulk materials. How a large delivery truck can access this site will be evaluated if and when a Site Plan is submitted.
6. Sec. 411, Agricultural Overlay District, requires that the dimensional requirements of the underlying zoning district apply in the AG districts. The area of this site meets the minimum lot size for the R-3 district. It is unclear whether the proposal will meet the other requirements of the R-3 district (such as setbacks).

The applicant's response memo dated June 16, 2026, clarified some information. The applicant confirmed that they are the sole owner of the business and have full control of the operations. The applicant confirmed that the subject site would not be used for any business operations for Foundations Property Management. They noted that the business had a separate lease agreement for a property in Milan, which was used for all daily business. There were no plans to construct a permanent greenhouse. The scope of retail use would be minor, and no building would be needed for the pickup of the plant materials. No bulk materials would be sold to the public on site, only plant materials.

The Planning Staff recommended holding the public hearing and obtaining public comment and addressing questions related to the viability of the operation if sales were expected to be minimal, how plants would be sold or distributed, the possibility that the sales component would grow over time to a commercial land use, the inconsistency of the size of the site only being five acres, and how plants would be maintained without a water source.

Ms. Kehrler (Commissioner) asked for clarification between a temporary and permanent greenhouse. The Planning Staff stated that both would have to go through a site plan approval process and meet the requirements, and that they were viewed the same way from a planning and zoning perspective.

Ms. Lecoq (Commissioner) asked if the Agriculture Overlay would remain if the property was sold. The Planning Staff explained that it would allow only this type of use, and any future users would have to return to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked if there were homes behind the property. The Planning Staff reported that on the other side of the wetlands, to the north of the property, there was a subdivision. There were also residential properties to the east and west. Ms. Peterson commented that the Master Plan indicated the need for 10 to 30 acres, so it was changing the Master Plan to allow only five acres.

Ms. El-Assadi (Commissioner) commented that only approximately 2.7 acres of usable land remained due to the wetlands. She asked for expansion on potted versus planted plants. The Planning Staff stated that the applicant proposed planting the trees and keeping them in pots, but the distinction did not have an impact from a planning and zoning perspective.

It was asked whether the distinction between grown on-site and not grown on-site mattered. The Planning Staff indicated that they would still consider the proposal a nursery even though the plants were not grown in the ground.

Mr. Kirby (Commissioner) asked if people would also be purchasing items. The Planning Staff confirmed that they would, and the applicant had indicated it would be a minimal amount, but that should be addressed with the applicant.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked about the water sources. The Planning Staff stated that the applicant did not intend to utilize the available public water.

Ms. El-Assadi (Commissioner) asked whether the Agriculture Overlay would remain in place even if the business failed. The Planning Staff confirmed that it would, even if ownership changed. A future owner would need to return for another rezoning only if a condition was offered related to the specific zoning or business.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked whether any surrounding properties were similar to the proposed one. The Planning Staff reported that similar properties to the Agriculture Overlay were in the area. Ms. Peterson asked if those properties had the sufficient land indicated by the Master Plan. The Planning Staff stated that there were a few smaller ones, but they were often existing farms looking to remain preserved.

Ms. El-Assadi (Commissioner) asked where the Foundations Property Management business was located. The Planning Staff reported that the principal use had to be the nursery, and the applicant was trying to ensure that the location would not become a contractor's yard.

The applicant, Andrew Burmeister, welcomed any questions.

Mr. Kirby (Commissioner) asked how plants would be watered. Mr. Burmeister stated that Yucca had hydrants that could not be tapped into for residential use. Rain collectors would be used, and the nursery would be very small, necessitating less water. There would also be mulch-in planting, which would decrease the water needed. Large pickup water containers could be utilized if needed. Rented water meters through Yucca were the backup plan. Each plant was anticipated to use less than half a gallon of water per week. Mr. Kirby asked who the clients were. Mr. Burmeister stated that most clients were people building in town who wanted trees for windbreaks.

Mr. Sinkule (Commissioner) asked how long the applicant had owned the property and what the use had been. Mr. Burmeister stated that he had owned the property for 10 to 15 years, and he had used the barn for storage. Foundations Property Management had used the property for some time in the past, but a different location had been in place for several years. Mr. Burmeister noted that debris from dead plants was handled at the other site. Mr. Sinkule asked about the proposed hours of operation. Mr. Burmeister stated that he anticipated being open only on weekends. He added that he planned to sell only trees before they were 36 inches tall. Some clients did want to stop by on the way home from work, so he would be flexible by appointment only. Mr. Sinkule asked if the primary trees were evergreen. Mr. Burmeister confirmed that they would primarily sell evergreen trees due to their hardiness and lower susceptibility to pests.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked how many plants would be on site. Mr. Burmeister stated that it depended on the stage of growth, but the range was a few hundred to a thousand. He noted that 30-40 fit on one pallet. Ms. Peterson asked what they would do in the winter. Mr. Burmeister stated their goal was to ensure that the plants were hardy, and they would be grown for 12 to 24 months before selling them. No winter cover was needed so that they could be ready for the winter. If there was a late spring frost, a frost cover may be used.

Ms. El-Assadi (Commissioner) asked what type of trucking would be used. Mr. Burmeister stated that on-site transportation would be a small, compact tractor, but most of the work would be done by hand. Deliveries were minimal and received via FedEx.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked what type of experience the applicant had. Mr. Burmeister reported that he had a bachelor's degree in horticulture and had his commercial pesticide applicator license through MDARD. A wetland delineation was also completed.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked about the protection of the existing wetlands from any pesticides. Mr. Burmeister reported that his pesticide license addressed that exact issue, so he had sufficient knowledge of wetland protection.

Ms. El-Assadi (Commissioner) asked what size the roof was to collect rainwater. Mr. Burmeister stated that it was a 30-foot by 40-foot building.

Ms. Lacoq (Commissioner) asked if there were any rules or regulations for water collection. The Planning Staff confirmed that there were none. If there were very large rain barrels, certain screening requirements would be needed. Mr. Burmeister noted that they were not planning on putting up a large structure. The containers would be approximately three by three by three feet.

Mr. Sinkule (Commissioner) asked if there would be 1,000 plants on site. Mr. Burmeister confirmed that it was the maximum amount. Mr. Sinkule asked how many people would be watering the plants if there was a hot summer with little rain. Mr. Burmeister stated that he would do most of the watering. The goal was water conservation. The 1,000 plants would be the peak in the spring, and the number of plants would be lower in the summer.

Ms. Lacoq (Commissioner) asked if the approval would prohibit other types of nurseries from being on site. The Planning Staff stated that any planned nursery would be allowed by changing the zone.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 7:26 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING ENDED AT 7:26 P.M.

- **OLD BUSINESS**

None to Report.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. CONDITIONAL REZONING – 8061 MERRITT RD – TO CONSIDER THE CONDITIONAL REZONING FROM R-3, ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TO ADD THE AG, AGRICULTURAL OVERLAY**

Mr. Kirby (Commissioner) noted that his only concern was the size of the property falling outside of the Master Plan specifications.

Ms. Lacoq (Commissioner) noted that she shared the same concern and was not sure if it was the best land use in terms of land preservation.

Mr. Sinkule (Commissioner) agreed with the concern related to the smaller property size. He noted that he appreciated the project's scope.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) agreed with the concern related to the property size.

Ms. El-Assadi (Commissioner) noted her concerns about the property size, the water, and the potential of switching to a different nursery business if the proposed one did not work out.

Mr. Sinkule (Commissioner) asked if the current use did not require a residence. The Planning Staff stated that it was a pole barn, and typically it would not be permitted on the R-3 zoned property. He noted that they would have to look back at the timing to see if it was allowed at the time of the original property purchase.

The Planning Staff stated that there was no formal recommendation for the conditional rezoning.

MOTION: Ms. Lecoq **MOVED** to recommend denial to the Township Board of Trustees for the request to conditionally rezone and add the AG, Agricultural Overlay District to the 5-acre parcel with underlying zoning of R-3, One-Family Residential, located at 8061 Merritt Road, Ypsilanti, MI, 48197, Parcel K-11-27-300-006, as the request illustrated in the submitted materials and additional explanatory memo (dated June 16, 2026) describing the proposed Plant Nursery use of the site and with the voluntary conditions offered, is inconsistent with the criteria established in the Township Zoning Ordinance Section 1804, Criteria for amendment to the Official Zoning Map, due to the following reasons: the size of

the site is out of the boundary for the Master Plan and does not seem to be fully compatible with the Master Plan Agricultural Overlay. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Kehrer.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Kehrer (Yes), Ms. Lecoq (Yes), Mr. Kirby (Yes), Mr. Sinkule (Yes), Ms. Peterson (Yes), and Ms. El-Assadi (Yes).

b. PRELIMINARY SKETCH PLAN REVIEW – KALLITA TURBINES – 2830 TYLER RD – TO CONSIDER THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 12,000 SQUARE FOOT STORAGE BUILDING ON A 9.8 ACRE SITE ZONED I-C, INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL

The Planning Staff reported that the applicant is proposing to build a 12,000-square-foot storage building on a 9.8-acre site that contains other buildings and parking serving the Kalitta Turbines business. The business uses this facility to assemble, repair, clean, and warehouse turbines. The new building will be used for additional parts storage and will not include any repair, office, or plumbing facilities. The building will be accessed via asphalt paving to overhead loading doors on the north and west sides. Avionic repair and manufacturing, including airplanes, helicopters, and drones, are permitted for use in this district. A layout of the proposed building was presented, and it was indicated that it was typical of the other buildings on site. Kalitta Turbines performed avionic repairs and expanded the site over time. There would be little impact outside the site.

The Planning Staff reviewed the sketch plan process, noting that it was a smaller scale and required less information than a site plan. It was intended to be proportional to the extent of the change. If approved, the final sketch plan would be conducted by the Township Staff and outside agencies if required. The site is zoned as I-CR (Industrial and Commercial Revitalization) and avionics manufacturing is permitted on the site. The Planning Staff requested that the applicant specify the color temperature of proposed fixtures at not more than 3,500 kelvins on the final sketch plan. The engineering report included comments to address in the final sketch plan. The Fire Marshall provided their approval.

The Planning Staff recommended approval with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall address all outstanding comments from review agencies during the final sketch plan review process.

2. The applicant shall revise all plan sheets to reflect the results of this evening's discussion, if there are any.
3. The applicant shall obtain all applicable internal and outside agency permits prior to construction.

Joe Manor with Washtenaw Engineering stated that he was in attendance on behalf of the property owners. All of the outside agencies' sketch plan approvals were received. The project would extend the water main to provide fire hydrant coverage for the building and provide 100% stormwater infiltration into the ground. The project also included planting a couple of trees and adding paving around the building for access.

Mr. Sinkule (Commissioner) asked if the sketch plan had been presented to the Planning Commission before. The Planning Staff stated that he believed the Planning Commission had seen a request for a building expansion for Kallita Turbines in the last four to five years.

MOTION: Mr. Kirby **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the preliminary sketch plan submitted by Kallita Turbines to permit construction of a 12,000 square foot storage building located at 2830 Tyler Road, Parcels K-11-13-206-008 and 006 with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall address all outstanding comments from review agencies during the final sketch plan review process.
2. The applicant shall revise all plan sheets to reflect the results of this evening's discussion, if there are any.
3. The applicant shall obtain all applicable internal and outside agency permits prior to construction.

The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Peterson.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Kehrler (Yes), Ms. Lecoq (Yes), Mr. Kirby (Yes), Mr. Sinkule (Yes), Ms. Peterson (Yes), and Ms. El-Assadi (Yes).

- **OPEN DISCUSSIONS FOR ISSUES NOT ON AGENDA**
 - **Correspondence Received**

None to Report.

- **Planning Commission Members**

None to Report.

- **Members of the Audience**

None to Report.

- **TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) reported that the established Jazz Fest will begin on July 31, 2026.

- **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

None to Report.

- **TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY REPORT**

None to Report.

- **PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

The Planning Staff reported that the two upcoming scheduled meetings are August 11 and 25, 2026. By the end of the week, the Planning Staff will notify the Planning Commission if the August 11 meeting is canceled. The Planning Staff noted that one working session item was expected, and Creekside North was anticipated to come forward at one of the August meetings. In one of the two meetings in September, a focus meeting on the Master Plan will be held. There would likely be a subcommittee for the Master Plan, and it was expected to include a few Planning Commission members.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked about the delay with Culver's. The Planning Staff reported that Culver's had approval to begin in December 2025, but they were finishing other development projects and were now making more progress on the development.

The Planning Staff reported that the recommended text amendments were going to the Board in August 2026.

The Planning Staff reported that Dennis McClain was retired.

Ms. Peterson (Commissioner) asked about the hotel construction. The Planning Staff reported that the Holiday Inn had received a 12-month extension, and the final site plan was anticipated in the next month or two.

- **OTHER BUSINESS**

None to Report.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Mr. Kirby **MOVED** to adjourn at 7:49 p.m. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Peterson and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

Respectively Submitted by Minutes Services LLC