

Genoa Township Planning Commission
March 9, 2026
Unapproved Minutes

**GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
March 9, 2026**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Grajek called the meeting of the Genoa Charter Township Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were Chris Grajek, Tim Chouinard, Glynis McBain, Marianne McCreary, Eric Rauch, and Bill Reiber. Absent was Greg Rassel. Also present were Planning Director Amy Ruthig and Planning Coordinator Bobby Foster.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved by Commissioner McCreary, supported by Commissioner Chouinard, to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

The call to the public was made at 6:31 pm with no response.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING # 1...Review and discussion of Master Plan survey results.

Ms. Ruthig advised that the Master Plan Survey results were redone and are included in the packet this evening. She also provided a summary of the comments. She is asking for direction from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner McCreary noted that most of the respondents were 51 and older and opinions of other age demographics are needed. Commissioner Rauch believes that having a focus group is critical and should include the other demographics. Commissioner Rauch stated there should be a few people from each age group in the focus group. There are specific results of the survey that need more attention.

Commissioner McBain agrees that it is important that the younger residents fill out the survey. They are the residents who will be utilizing the businesses and services in the future.

Ms. Ruthig suggested having more questions regarding housing. Commissioner Rauch requested staff provide a comparison of what the current Master Plan shows and the responses that were received regarding types of housing is preferred. The commission discussed affordable housing. Commissioner Rauch stated the township ordinance does not allow a

residence to be smaller than 1,500 square feet, so that is contributing to the problem of affordable housing. He suggested the ordinance be changed.

The commission discussed accessory structures on residential properties, specifically should they be required to be attached or still allowed to be a separate building on the property.

For the types of jobs and businesses residents would like to see, there was a high percentage of residents who prefer restaurants, retail and shopping. Commissioner Rauch stated this confirms the township as a bedroom community.

Commissioner Reiber noted that many residents are agreeable to pay additional taxes to have the township purchase vacant land or developmental rights. There was a discussion regarding which choice would be best for the township and the residents.

The call to the public was made at 7:08 pm.

Ms. Deb Beattie of 3109 Pineview Trail was happy with the survey results. She provided a summary of the answers for specific questions in the survey. She stated that younger people travel, shop and go to restaurants so she is not sure what services the township can provide that would appeal to them.

Mr. Jeff Dhaenens of 5494 Sharp Drive stated when he was in Australia he passed 15-20 botanical gardens. The township has acquired two pieces of property and this is an opportunity to preserve that land. He noted that only 2.5 percent of the residents responded to the survey.

A small data center, such as the type that 123 Net uses, could be appropriate for Genoa Township. A large data center is not.

The call to the public was closed at 7:15 pm.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING # 2...Discussion of Data Center Ordinances.

Ms. Ruthig stated that there must be an ordinance that will allow data centers so the Planning Commission has to decide where in the township they would like them.

Chairman Grajek asked what do data centers bring to the township? They bring tax dollars, but not many jobs. Commissioner Rauch stated some of the benefits to these being developed versus housing or businesses are they do not generate traffic or have an impact on schools. His recommendation of how to limit them is to allow them in heavy industrial zoning or in an industrial zone with special land use or an overlay district. Ms. Ruthig showed a map outlining the properties in the township that are zoned industrial and are over 20 acres. Commissioner Rauch recommended allowing them as an overlay district in the industrial zoning area on Grand

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Oaks Drive. The commission discussed the restrictions that Ms. Ruthig is recommending for the ordinance, such as setbacks, screening, noise, light, hazardous materials, environmental impact, energy requirements, and decommissioning. Other limitations could be the size of the building, maximum power consumption, what type of data centers would be allowed, and bond requirements.

Ms. Ruthig will return to the Planning Commission with a draft ordinance.

The call to the public was made at 7:47 pm.

Ms. Beattie made suggestions for what items should be addressed in the ordinance, such as water use, lawsuits, noise, and more frequent inspections. She spoke about how the ordinance states fuel tanks are allowed to be under 300 gallons, which is not 300 gallons, it's 299 gallons. Ms. Ruthig stated the ordinance is being changed to two 500 gallons or less.

The call to the public was closed at 7:52 pm.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

Staff Report

Ms. Ruthig stated she anticipates having the Data Center Ordinance on the next meeting agenda. There will also be one more item.

Ms. Ruthig addressed the concern regarding the approval for the Marlo property. She stated there was an error in the agenda item, which was carried into the motion. It should be corrected to say 300 gallons.

Approval of the February 9 and February 23, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes

There was a discussion regarding changes needed to the minutes. It was determined that a more thorough look at the recording is needed.

Moved by Commissioner McCreary, supported by Commissioner Chouinard, to table the approval of the February 9, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Moved by McCreary, supported by Commissioner Reiber, to table the approval of the February 23, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Member Discussion

Commissioner McCreary spoke about a ZBA item for land splits on Brighton Road for the vacant parcels behind Jonna's Market. One of them was recently put up for sale.

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Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner McCreary, seconded by Commissioner Rauch, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas, Recording Secretary