

Plan Commission Annual Report: April 2025 – March 2026

Submitted by Jodi Lomma Town of Grant Plan Commission chair

Plan Commission Members:

Tom Reitter
Diana Luecht (through 12/2025)
Jeanne Eggebrecht
Scharon Schwab
Jodi Lomma – Chairperson
Kathleen Lee – Secretary through 12/2025

Summary:

The Plan Commission met 13 times since the Annual Meeting in April 2024. In addition to reviewing three conditional use permit requests for residents, the focus of this report period was to complete revisions to the Town of Grant Zoning Ordinance. Throughout the year, the Plan Commission reviewed specific feedback from the January 22, 2025 public hearing on the Zoning Ordinance and completed revisions to the language as needed. In addition, feedback was requested from the town attorney, and language was adjusted per his recommendations. The Plan Commission voted to recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance in the December 17, 2025 meeting. It was approved by the Town Board in the February 11, 2026 meeting. It was reviewed and approved by the Portage County Planning and Zoning committee on March 24, 2026, with one amendment to the setback for Shoreland Zoning.

Sign Ordinance & Sign Permit application:

The revised Sign Ordinance was approved in the April 9, 2025 Town Board meeting. The Sign permit application, which is used for permanent signs, was approved in the February 18, 2026 Plan Commission meeting. The application permit was then made available to the Zoning Administrator and published on the Town website on March 6, 2026.

Zoning Ordinance:

The Plan Commission continued the review of the comments and feedback from the public hearing that was held on January 22, 2025. Topics that were addressed included a comparison of the permitted/conditional uses across the agriculture districts, attached/detached Accessory Dwelling units, flower/vegetable plant sales in General Agriculture, private burials and the procedure to request zoning ordinance changes. Once the Plan Commission completed updating the Ordinance, it was sent to the Town attorney for comments. The attorney feedback review & update was completed in the December 17, 2025 meeting. The Plan Commission unanimously approved a motion to recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance to the Town Board in that meeting. The Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval of the zoning changes for 14 parcels in the May 21, 2025 meeting. These zoning changes were reviewed in the April 16, 2024 public hearing. The Zoning Ordinance and the recommended changes to the zoning of 14 parcels were on the agenda for the January board meeting. Additional information was requested and presented to the Town Board on February 11, 2026. The Board unanimously approved the Zoning Ordinance and rezones in the February 11, 2026 meeting. It was reviewed and approved with one amendment to change the setback in Shoreland to 75 feet in the Portage County Planning and Zoning Committee on March 24, 2026.

Farmland Preservation Reporting for 2025:

There were no rezones out of the Farmland Preservation District in 2025. The annual report was submitted to DATCP on February 19, 2026.

Conditional Use Permits (CUP)

Christie Gause-Bemis on behalf of Sharon Nalbach – New CUP for a short-term rental offering retreats located at 8511 Lake Road.

- The property is zoned Low Density Residential.
- Public hearing on May 14, 2025 with subsequent approval by the Town Board with agreed upon conditions

Lucas Zaremba – Review of hobby business to determine if CUP was required

- Attended Plan Commission meeting on July 16, 2025
- Mr. Zaremba makes ammunition for his hobby of competitive shooting and is expanding to be able to build firearms
- Have appropriate ATF permits FFL-6 and FFL-7
- No storefront and no testing of firearms or ammunition at location in high density residential
- Concluded this is a hobby and not occupation, therefore no CUP is required at this time

Tim O'Connor and Matthew Steele – New CUP for storage condominium for multi-function storage and work buildings

- Located on property zoned Commercial at 90th Street North and State Highway 54.
- Request was introduced at the August 20, 2025 Plan Commission meeting, and then discussed in the September 17, October 15, 2025 and October 29, 2025 meetings
- Conditional Use Permit was approved by the Town Board with agreed upon conditions

Other notable items of business:

Farmland Preservation: The Farmland Preservation District was removed as part of the Zoning Ordinance update. There had been no participation in the program in the Town of Grant. Once the District was removed, the program is no longer available in the Town of Grant. The Plan Commission will conduct a review of the program after the Portage County Ordinance re-write is completed and the Farmland Preservation Plan is recertified by the county.

Zoning Ordinance Enforcement:

Enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance is documented both in Section XI Violations and Penalties of the Zoning Ordinance and in the Citation Ordinance – Issuance of citations for violations of town ordinances 4/16/2008. The Zoning Ordinance defines who enforces the Ordinance, what the penalties are and the process that is followed for enforcement. The Citation Ordinance describes who has the authority to issue a citation, what form it will take and the procedure to be followed. The town Attorney shared that typically a citation is a last resort to resolving an issue. The Town will work to resolve violations through communication (meetings and letters) before bringing a lawsuit.

Plan Commission Staff Changes:

Kathy Lee, who fulfilled the role of Plan Commission Secretary for over ten years, retired from the role in December once the Zoning Ordinance was complete. In addition, Diana Luecht's term was complete in 2025, and she graciously agreed to continue in the role as well until the Zoning Ordinance was complete in December. We wish to thank both Diana and Kathy for their service.

Future items of business:

- Review CUP's from residents as they occur (first priority)
- Review fee schedule
- Work with Portage County on approval of the Town of Grant Solar Overlay Addendum to the County Comprehensive Plan
- Data Center Ordinance
- Private Burial Ordinance