

**NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING/PUBLIC HEARING  
July 1, 2025, at 6:30 PM  
17425 RED ARROW HIGHWAY,  
NEW BUFFALO, MI 49117  
Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lauricella at 6:30 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Present: Anderson, Armstrong, Arvanitis, Lauricella, Nesci, Schmidt, Wagner  
Absent: None  
Pledge of Allegiance

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL NON-HEARING RELATED (LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES EACH)**

Public Comments were heard by the Commission.

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**PUBLIC HEARING – # 2025-07-01**

Arvanitis moved, Wagner supported, opening the public hearing on the proposed Private Road at 16391 Red Arrow Hwy, Union Pier, MI at 6:34 p.m.

Verbal vote: CARRIED

The Planning Commission heard comments on the request of Kevin Claton, Claton Millennium Properties for a Private Road to be located at 16391 Red Arrow Highway, Union Pier, MI, 49129 being 11-13-0336-0073-13-0 to provide access for a Residential Site Condominium consisting of 7 Duplex Units.

**COMMENTS BY APPLICANT:** Robert Andrew, Project Engineer, appeared along with Kevin Claton, in support of this application. Mr. Andrew stated that he believes the proposed road and site plan to be in compliance with local ordinances and offered to answer questions.

**COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSION:** The Commission inquired if the Driftwood development abutting this property was granted a pedestrian easement. Mr. Andrew confirmed that the pedestrian easement was granted along with an easement for water. Discussion was held regarding the speed limit and available pedestrian crossings along Red Arrow Highway. The Commission expressed its desire for the speed limit to be lowered to 45 mph along Red Arrow Highway and for more pedestrian crossing to be installed so that residents on the East side of Red Arrow can safely access the non-motorized trail on the West side of Red Arrow. The Commission inquired about the price point and type of housing that will be installed. Mr. Andrew stated that duplexes connected by garages will be built and sold for \$800,000-\$850,000. The Commission further inquired if the current retention plan is based on the gravel road, which was confirmed by Mr. Andrew. When asked, he stated further that no amenities are currently planned for the development.

**COMMENTS BY ZONING ADMINISTRATOR:** Zoning Administrator, Estelle Brinkman, was not present but submitted the following comments: "The private road and proposed site plan has been reviewed by the Township engineering firm Wightman and Associates for compliance with private road specification and by myself for zoning compliance and found the proposed site plan to be in compliance with Township ordinances."

**PUBLIC HEARING WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE:** Correspondence was received from the John & Barbara June Revocable Trust in support of lowering the speed limit on Red Arrow Highway and installing more pedestrian crossings.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES EACH):** None

Arvanitis moved, Armstrong supported, closing the public hearing on the proposed SLU at 16130 Red Arrow Hwy, Union Pier, MI at 6:48 p.m.

Verbal vote: CARRIED

#### 4. BUSINESS SECTION

##### Public Hearing Consideration for Private Road

It should be noted that all of today's public hearings have been individually reviewed by each Commissioner by the standards outlined in the New Buffalo Township Zoning Ordinance Article 455-1.21 Private Streets Subsection F & G.

F. Design requirements. The construction of private streets shall conform to the Berrien County Road Department construction standards for local roads, excepting pavement width and grade requirements and as otherwise provided in this chapter, as follows:

- (1) No private street shall extend for more than 2,640 feet from the nearest public street right-of-way, as measured along the center line of the private street, without a second direct access thereto being available from a public street.
- (2) All private streets shall have a recorded permanent right-of-way and easement with a minimum width of at least 40 feet. The right-of-way shall also expressly permit public or private utilities to be installed within the right-of-way.
- (3) The area in which the private street is to be located shall have a minimum cleared width of 28 feet, which clearing shall always be maintained.
- (4) Road surface may be gravel but shall meet the MDOT 22A gravel standard.
- (5) Pavement widths shall conform to the following table. Any private street serving five or fewer parcels which is subsequently extended to serve more than five parcels shall be upgraded in its entirety to meet the pavement width requirements of this section.

Standards	Serving 5 or Fewer Lots (feet)	
	18	22
Pavement width		

(6) Any private street which terminates at a dead end shall provide adequate turnaround for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles as determined by the Zoning Administrator with the Township Engineer. A "hammerhead" turnaround or options other than a circular cul-de-sac may be considered. Private streets serving more than five private properties shall require a cul-de-sac with a minimum radius of 40 feet or such turnaround adequate to handle fire trucks and other emergency turnarounds as are permitted by the Zoning Administrator and the Township Engineer.

(7) The road surface shall have a minimum crown of 0.02 foot per foot from the center line of the private street to the outside edge thereof.

(8) A road shoulder at least two feet wide, composed of six inches of compacted gravel, shall be provided on each side of the private road surface and shall slope 1/2 inch per foot from the outside edge of the road surface to the toe of the slope.

(9) The maximum longitudinal road grade shall not exceed 6%, provided that the Township Board may allow up to a 10% grade if the applicant produces written justification, satisfactory to the Township Engineer, that an increase in the road grade will not adversely affect public safety and the design of the road system.

(10) The layout of the private street and the intersections of the private street with either a public or private street shall be such that clear vision, safe turning, and travel in all directions at the posted speed limit is assured, as determined by the Township Engineer. The minimum distance between intersections of public and/or private street rights-of-way shall not be less than 100 feet, as measured along the right-of-way line thereof.

(11) The private street shall be constructed with such stormwater runoff, culverts, and drainage contours as are required by the Township Engineer and Berrien County Drain Commission to ensure adequate drainage and runoff.

(12) The method and construction technique used in the crossing of any natural stream, wetland, or drainage course shall satisfy the requirements of the Township Engineer and any other agency having jurisdiction thereof.

(13) The private street shall be given a name, and street signs shall be installed in accordance with the standards and approval of the Berrien County Road Department. The private street addresses shall be posted in a conspicuous place at the entrance to the private street (at the intersection with the public road) in letters at least three inches high. Private streets serving two or more dwellings shall have a standard stop sign where the private street abuts a public street or another private street.

(14) The private street shall meet all requirements of the NFPA National Fire Prevention Code.

(15) The maximum number of lots on a single access cul-de-sac or dead-end road shall not be more than 25.

(16) A person or persons shall not erect, construct, place or maintain any bumps, fences, gates, chains, bars, pipes, wood or metal horses or any other type of obstruction on any private street designed to limit access or control vehicular speed.

#### G. Approval standards.

(1) Prior to final approval of a private street permit application, the Township Board shall determine the following:

(a) The private street will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare.

(b) The private street will not adversely affect the use of land.

(c) The private street is designed and constructed with width, surface, and grade measurements that assure safe passage and maneuverability of private and public safety vehicles.

- (d) The private street is constructed in a manner that minimizes soil erosion and prevents damage to the lakes, streams, wetlands, and the natural environment of the Township.
- (e) The private street can provide future connection to existing or proposed public rights-of-way or private streets.
- (f) Maintenance of the private street has been adequately provided for.
- (2) The Zoning Administrator may require that the applicant comply with reasonable conditions relative to the design and construction of the private street.

**Private Road Case Number 2025-07-01; Kevin Claton, Claton Millennium Properties**

**Findings of Fact:**

- Yes The New Buffalo Township Engineering firm Wightman & Associates has conducted a site plan review in compliance with the above stated standards and submitted its findings to the Township.
- Yes The Zoning Administrator has reviewed the Private Road application & site plan for the proposed site condominium consisting of 7 Duplex units and found the application to be in compliance with New Buffalo Township Ordinances.
- Yes The Planning Commission has reviewed the application and site plan for compliance with the standards of the New Buffalo Township Zoning Ordinance detailed in Articles 6.3 and 7.1.

Armstrong moved, Wagner supported, recommending approval as submitted.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Anderson	<u>Yes</u>
Armstrong	<u>Yes</u>
Arvanitis	<u>Yes</u>
Lauricella	<u>Yes</u>
Nesci	<u>Yes</u>
Schmidt	<u>Yes</u>
Wagner	<u>Yes</u>

Motion            CARRIED

- a. Excused Absences (if any)  
No commissioners were absent.

- b. Approve Minutes  
Arvanitis moved, Schmidt supports, approving the minutes from the May 6, 2025, meeting.

Motion            CARRIED

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

Committee member selection for Master Plan update. The Commission reached a consensus that Lauricella, Armstrong, and Schmidt will serve on the committee.

## 6. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received from Christine Jaber in support of revisiting tabled amendments to the marihuana ordinance.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

Arvanitis moved, Wagner supported, adjourning at 6:59 p.m.

Motion            CARRIED

*Submitted by:*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Schmidt, Secretary

*Drafted by:*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Hannon, Recording Secretary