

**NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING/PUBLIC HEARINGS
JULY 7, 2026, 6:30 PM
17425 RED ARROW HIGHWAY,
NEW BUFFALO, MI 49117
Minutes**

1. ROLL CALL & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT – General Non-Hearing Related

Jacob Vravis – asked that the Planning Commission revisit the hours of operation that the cannabis dispensaries are open and maybe have them close at 7:00 p.m. instead of 9:00 p.m.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

PUBLIC HEARING – CASE NUMBER 2026-06-01 (*Continued from June 2, 2026*)

Arvanitis moved, Nesci supported, to reopen the public hearing on the proposed special land use at 19701 Kluver Road, New Buffalo, MI at 6:34 p.m.

Verbal vote: Carried

The Planning Commission will hear comments on the request of Phoenix Logistics for Special Land Use to operate a Contractor Storage Yard at 19701 Kluver Road, New Buffalo, MI 49117 being 11-13-0021-0003-00-5

COMMENT BY APPLICANT – Will Shroyer spoke on behalf of Phoenix Logistics, he wanted to reiterate that no data center will be built on this site. Security measures include two layers of silt fencing, a six-foot-high soil berm, and a six-foot-tall chain link fence. The applicant confirmed with EGLE (formerly DEQ) that soil for the berm could be sourced from the site or relocated from their other site.

COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSION – The commission asked about the soil being brought in from the Michigan City site to this site is good to go with EGLE, or did EGLE test the soil. Will Shroyer stated that when the project is done, they plan on removing the soil and putting the land back to how it was when purchased.

COMMENTS BY ZONING ADMINISTRATOR – None.

PUBLIC HEARING WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE – None.

PUBLIC COMMENT (LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES EACH) –

Jacob Vrahis talked about the bait and switch tactic to eventually build a data center.

Brad Seiler talked about the zoning regulations section 455-8.2 and how this would affect the surrounding area.

Sofia Perkins talked about how data centers affect the environment.

Jeff Albert talked about how the township doesn't have the resources to police the usage or the violations.

Jason Smith talked about the bait and switch tactic and the environmental and road hazards.

Arvanitis moved, Wagner supported, to close the public hearing on the proposed special land use at 19701 Kluver Road, New Buffalo, MI 49117 at 6:56 p.m.

Verbal vote: Carried

4. BUSINESS SECTION

SPECIAL LAND USE CASE NUMBER #2026-06-01; PHOENIX LOGISTICS

Findings of Fact

§ 455-8.2. Standards for special land use approval.

Each application shall be reviewed on an individual basis for conformity and compliance with the standards of this chapter, including those for site plan review and a finding that the special land use will meet all of the specific standards below:

Yes The use is designed and constructed, and will be operated and maintained, so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity, will be compatible with adjacent uses of land, and will not change the essential character of the area in which it is proposed.

Yes The use is, or will be as a result of the special land use permit, served adequately by public services and facilities, and including, but not limited to streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures and refuse disposal. Adequate water and sanitation facilities must be available.

Yes The use does not involve activities, processes, materials and equipment or conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property or the general welfare by reason of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare or odors.

Yes The use shall represent an improvement to the use or character of the property under consideration and the surrounding area in general, yet also be in keeping with the natural environment of the site.

Yes The site plan proposed for such use demonstrates compliance with the applicable specific design standards for the special land use as contained in Article 5.

Yes The use is consistent with the New Buffalo Township Master Plan.

Armstrong moved, Arvanitis supported, to recommend based on the finding of facts a conditional approval to the New Buffalo Township Board with conditions as written with the Special Land Use detailed in Article 6.3 of the Zoning Ordinance with the following modifications suggested by the Planning Commission:

- A specific timeline for the project, 12-15 months with an additional 3 months for the cleanup.
- No berm – eliminates the need to transport soil from other sites.
- Security bond for 100% of restoration costs for the site, roads, water and soil.
- Clarification from La Porte County commissioners regarding the use of an access route.
- The need for a third-party company to oversee the project, restoration of the roads and land once the project is completed.

Roll Call vote:

Anderson - No
Armstrong - Yes
Arvanitis - Yes
Lauricella - Yes
Nesci - No
Schmidt - No
Wagner - No

Motion: Defeated

Nesci moved, Schmidt supported, a motion to deny the recommendation of approval to New Buffalo Township Board based upon the following findings of fact not being met:

- The use is designed and constructed, and will be operated and maintained, so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity, will be compatible with adjacent uses of land, and will not change the essential character of the area in which it is proposed.
- The use is, or will be as a result of the special land use permit, served adequately by public services and facilities, and including, but not limited to streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures and refuse disposal. Adequate water and sanitation facilities must be available.

- The use does not involve activities, processes, materials and equipment or conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property or the general welfare by reason of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare or odors.
- The use shall represent an improvement to the use or character of the property under consideration and the surrounding area in general, yet also be in keeping with the natural environment of the site.
- The site plan proposed for such use demonstrates compliance with the applicable specific design standards for the special land use as contained in Article 5.
- The use is consistent with the New Buffalo Township Master Plan.

Roll Call vote:

Wagner – Yes

Schmidt – Yes

Nesci – Yes

Lauricella – No

Arvanitis – No

Armstrong – No

Anderson – Yes

Motion: Carried

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Excused absences - None

B. Approve minutes

Schmidt moved, Wagner supported, to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2026. meeting.

MOTION: Carried

6. CORRESPONDENCE - None

7. ADJOURNMENT

Arvanitis moved, Wagner supported, to adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

MOTION: Carried


Barb Anderson, Secretary