

City of Charlevoix
Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 8, 2026 - 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, 210 State Street, Charlevoix, MI

A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Muladore. The Commission, staff, and members of the public rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Roll Call

Chair: Jennifer Muladore

Members Present: Scott Beatty, Shelley Boehmer, Christine Galbreath, Kristin Jones, Maureen Radke

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Jonathan Scheel, Director of Planning and Zoning

C. Inquiry into Potential Conflicts of Interest

None.

D. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Member Jones, seconded by Member Beatty to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

E. Approval of the Minutes

1. Minutes of May 11, 2026

Member Radke stated that a correction was needed at the end of page 2, to read: " Members Radke and Boehmer expressed a middle position emphasizing the historic value of downtown and noting that many buildings are already close to three stories."

Motion by Member Boehmer, seconded by Member Galbreath to approve the minutes of May 11, 2026 as amended.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

F. Call for Public Comment Not Related to Agenda Items

None.

G. New Business

1. Sheridan Street Development preliminary review

John Kurtz, Representative of Sheridan Street Development, stated the Commission was aware of this project, and he had requested to be on the agenda tonight, but was unable to forward the information to Director Scheel on a timely basis. Mr. Kurtz stated his presentation would be scheduled for the July Planning Commission Meeting.

H. Old Business

1. Data Center Ordinance

Director Scheel reported that he had continued researching data centers and recently attended a related event in Gaylord. He reviewed the event's presentation slides with the Commission.

He noted that two visitors at the previous meeting had argued that cities should not regulate data centers through zoning. Director Scheel agreed with Mr. Boal that large hyperscale data centers do not meet "local needs" under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. However, he explained that smaller data centers could meet demonstrated local needs, which is what the City's proposed ordinance aims to address.

Director Scheel also expressed concern that the draft ordinance gave the City's electric department veto authority over proposed data centers if they determined the electrical infrastructure was insufficient, similar to the authority held by the water department. He noted that many data center companies are now building private power systems. He asked for the Commission's support to begin researching and drafting an ordinance to regulate private power companies. He then summarized key considerations related to data centers, including power grid impacts, infrastructure costs, water usage, incentive negotiations, zoning, land use, and long-term impacts.

Chair Muladore reminded attendees that this was not an official public hearing but welcomed public comments.

Director Scheel also addressed the topic of a moratorium, explaining that only the City Council could enact one. He stated that he does not believe the City faces an immediate risk of new data center proposals and that staff is actively working on an appropriate regulatory ordinance.

Ellis Boal, Attorney, stated that he did not have a strong position about a moratorium, but he did have a strong opinion about whether or not you even need to do anything. He explained his reasoning for why the City did not need to adopt an ordinance regulating data centers.

LuAnn Kozma, 9330 Woods Road, questioned if the Commission had received the paper written by Mr. Boal and if the City Attorney had responded, and Director Scheel stated that Mr. Howard had not responded. She referenced the City's industrial zone, and she did not feel that the City's Master Plan would allow any 24-hour operations in the industrial zone. She stated that the previous week they had an event at the Charlevoix Library about data centers with about 110 people in attendance, and she would be putting the videos from that meeting on their website, NoCharlevoixdatacenters.org.

Catherine Seger, 101 Eaton Court, questioned why this topic was up for discussion if the City does not have the physical space for a data center, and Director Scheel responded.

Andrew Page, lives by the ski hill, stated that he had specific questions about what was included in the proposed ordinance. He stated his concerns about data centers.

David Bean, 8635 Carson Avenue, referenced the noise from the existing cement plant and on his street he can hear all kinds of activity that is echoed across the water. His concern is low frequency and audible noise and the potential problems it can cause.

Oksana Posa, 320 W. Upright, questioned whether there are currently data centers in the City by right and will the proposed ordinance allow any of the existing low-frequency type facilities. Director Scheel explained legal non-confirming or "grandfathering in" a use that is currently existing.

Steve Jadwin, 911 State Street, stated that he was a data manager for 30 years and people have no idea the amount of money involved in AI and data centers. He referenced the AI centers in Northern Virginia where 25% of the nation's data centers exist.

Jenna, Horton Bay Road, stated that she was extremely scared for the community to see what was going to come and spoke against the impact of data centers and for preserving what is already here in the Charlevoix area.

Bill, Charlevoix Township, wanted to clarify some earlier points and referenced the Hayes Township proposal, and that Holtec is going to put in a data center, and he stated that the property was still owned by Consumers Power. He stated he worked for Consumers Power for 40 years, and he knows what they have planned for that property. Holtec only operates the dry fuel storage facility.

Jay Gibbons, 225 State Street, Boyne City, stated that \$30 billion in funding is proposed for about 34 projects in Michigan, and questioned how anyone could say that these facilities would be smaller scale in this area. He spoke against locating such facilities in this area.

Lyle Gennett, 217 Clinton Street, thanked Director Scheel and the Commission for listening to concerns and putting an ordinance forward for the City Council to consider.

Michelle Duprey, 11935 Pa Be Shan Trail, stated she would bet that most people are concerned about what is going to happen with the Big Rock property, and she encouraged the Commission to communicate with the surrounding communities as much as possible.

Chair Muladore explained the Commission's agenda and meeting process.

Director Scheel reviewed in detail the standards used to develop the proposed ordinance regarding data centers.

Member Beatty stated he was curious whether providing this ordinance acknowledges the need in this community for the service they were trying to regulate. He returned to Mr. Boal's argument that if it's of no immediate need that the ordinance may not be necessary, and he awaited the City Attorney's opinion on the matter. He felt that there should be a moratorium on such uses as a safety net.

Member Galbreath thanked the audience for their participation and comments. She stated that she did not feel they should be addressing the ordinance until they received the City Attorney's opinion on the matter.

Member-Radke Jones stated she was grateful for the participation and for the audience's comments. She stated that she had gone to the program in Gaylord the previous week, and she

was really struck that at the end of each presentation she heard everyone indicating that there needed to be a plan for when these facilities become obsolete.

Member Boehmer thanked everyone for their participation as well and stated that she was a bit overwhelmed by all the information provided and she was not sure that she could delve deep into this issue today.

Member Jones stated that she was prepared to address some specific things in the ordinance, but they may need to wait for more information.

Director Scheel reminded the Commission Members and the public to reach out to him with their questions and concerns.

Member Muladore stated that she started looking at what micro or small scale size was for these facilities, and she came across all these articles from California, where it's basically a server on a server rack in people's houses. Director Scheel stated that the definition of data center is not sufficient and needs to be addressed and very clearly defined. Members of the audience spoke and asked questions from their seats. Director Scheel stated that he and the Commission Members were educating themselves on the whole data center issue.

No action was taken.

I. Staff Updates

1. Zoning Administrator Report

Member ~~Galbreath~~ **Jones** stated that it was time to talk to Andy's Party Store about their sign.

Director Scheel stated that for the Redevelopment Ready Community the Economic Development Strategy that was written years ago includes numerous references to the Planning Commission so he will bring a report to the Commission at the next meeting.

Director Scheel stated that they would be having a ZBA meeting for a variance for an A/C unit at 421 Michigan.

Director Scheel reported that Berkshire-Hathaway Real Estate bought out the previous owner of the property on the hill on Hurlbut and has pre-sold six of the 14 units and when they have eight units sold they will be starting construction.

Director Scheel stated that another developer had come to him asking about property he had purchased on the corner of Carpenter and Sheridan (14 acres) and he anticipated that the developer would be coming forward in the next few months with a residential project. Most of the 14 acres is within Charlevoix Township.

Director Scheel stated that enforcement has started, and 40 letters were sent out for tall grass and other issues last Thursday.

Discussion followed in general regarding review of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the

need for a designated bike path through town.

J. Requests For Next Month's Agenda, Commissioner Comments or Research Items

Chair Muladore stated that the July meeting would include a public hearing for parking standards, and maybe the site plan review for Mr. Kurtz's project.

K. Adjournment by 8:00 p.m. unless extended by a motion

Chair Muladore adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Sarah J. Dvoracek/fgm

City Clerk

Jennifer Muladore

Chair