

Village of Onekama Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes - Approved
5283 Main Street, Onekama, MI 231-889-3171
January 13, 2026

Members present: Chair Christopher Forth, Vice Chair Debby Storms, Tom Foster. Also present: members of the public.

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Motion by Foster, seconded by Storms, to approve the agenda as amended. All in favor, motion carried.

November 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes: Motion by Storms, seconded by Foster, to approve the November 11th draft meeting minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

Public Hearings:

1. 2025 Draft Master Plan

Chair Forth introduced the 2025 draft Master Plan. Forth stated the process to update the Master Plan began in 2024 and public engagement was an important element in the success of the Master Plan. The consultant hired by the Village to complete the Plan held an initial public input session where participants identified strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. Following this public input session, three listening sessions were conducted by the consultant. Forth then summarized the various chapters of the Plan with a more detailed discussion involving the Action Table.

Forth asked the other Planning Commissioners for their thoughts regarding the master Plan. Commissioner Storms stated she believed it was a well-prepared plan and it will be important to implement Action items. Commissioner Foster thanked the members of the Steering Committee for their participation on the project.

Forth opened the public hearing.

Nola Teye asked for an overview of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Forth summarized the purpose of a DDA. Foster summarized his discussions with representatives from the Frankfort DDA and well as others. Teye also asked about zoning changes. Forth mentioned that the zoning ordinance is one of the primary tools used to implement Plan recommendations. Susan Halloran mentioned she is glad to see the planning process conclude and it will be a benefit for the Village to its own planning document. Mary Jo McElroy suggested a more in-depth discussion involving the Action Table. Forth led the

group discussion on the different Action Table categories. Lara Treemoore-Spears mentioned the draft Master Plan is a great document but additional information related to water quality needs to be included. Specifically, the Village has a responsibility to protect the environment from contaminants and heat associated with storm water runoff. Also, there is a trend toward shoreline hardening. Ms. Treemoore-Spears suggested these issues be addressed. In the Plan. Ms. Treemoore-Spears offered to provide suggested language that could be incorporated into the Plan.

Forth asked the other commissioners for their thoughts on this matter. Foster asked about amending the Plan at a later date. Forth noted that would require initiation of another public hearing process. If it is the desire of the Commission to include the information suggested by Ms. Treemoore-Spears, it should be added now before formal adoption. Storms agreed.

There being no further comments, a motion was offered by Storms, seconded by Foster, to adjourn the public hearing until the February 10, 2026 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved. Forth asked Treemoore-Spears to forward the suggested edit language.

2. Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Section 1011, Location and Regulation of Accessory Buildings and Structures. Chair Forth provided an overview of the proposed ordinance amendments that would allow an increase in the size and number of accessory buildings if certain conditions are met.

Forth opened the public hearing.

Rod Hudson asked for clarification on the size of an accessory building attached to the house. Forth stated an attached accessory building could not exceed the ground floor area of the house. Forth further explained that principal, or primary, use of the property is the house and not an accessory building. Mr. Hudson noted the ground floor area of his house is 1,400 sq. ft. and he would lose 400 sq. ft. if he were to attach an accessory building to the house. Mr. Hudson believed this proposed standard is arbitrary as is the requirement for 10-foot sidewalls if the size of the property is 2 acres or less. Nola Teye asked how this amendment may apply to her property. She stated she has four lots but all under one tax description. She mentioned they could be split into individual lots. Forth indicated there must be a dwelling on the lot to construct an accessory building, which is a requirement in the current Zoning Ordinance.

The public hearing was closed. There being no further discussion, a motion was offered by Storms, seconded by Foster, to recommend to the Village Council that the proposed amendments to Section 1011, Location and Regulation of Accessory Buildings and Structures, be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business:

None

Old Business:

None

Public Comment:

None

Motion to adjourn by Foster, seconded by Storms. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Christopher Forth, Chair

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