

Village of Onekama Planning Commission
March 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes—APPROVED
5283 Main Street, Onekama, MI

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

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

Approval of the Agenda: Motion by Storms, seconded by Foster, to approve the agenda as submitted. All in favor, motion carried.

February 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes: Motion by Storms, seconded by Foster, to approve the February 10th draft meeting minutes as amended. All in favor, motion carried.

Public Hearings:

None

New Business:

1. 2025 Master Plan - Review of Action Table and prioritization of Action Items. Forth mentioned the Village Council had approved the Master Plan during the February meeting. Forth suggested the Planning Commission review the action table and develop a list of priority items. Once complete, the list can be presented to the Village Council and discussed to ensure the action items for implementation are consistent with Village Council priorities.

Storms suggested an action item that is visible to the community to show we are accomplishing a recommendation/goal from the Master Plan. Based on the survey results, community members wanted to see the overhead power lines placed underground, sidewalks made safe, code enforcement officer to address blight in the Village and reduced vehicle speed along Main Street. Foster mentioned that Council is still considering sidewalk improvements. Foster also mentioned moving forward the short-term rental ordinance the Planning Commission drafted and provided to the Village Council. Forth indicated there was a survey question regarding short-term rentals and the response was generally neutral about regulating this type of land use activity.

Joe Suchocki provided an update of issues associated with the Trails Team. He also mentioned that community members want a safe sidewalk network. Tim Mastowi provided information regarding the PLA activities involving the powerlines through the Village. He mentioned an ongoing discussion involving changes to the lower powerlines but not the higher, high-power lines. The discussion does not include pole relocation.

Forth stated he reviewed the Master Plan action table and developed a list of potential items for consideration, which included (in no order of priority):

- Meet with the Township Planning Commission to discuss common issues such as mixed-use zoning, short-term rentals, accessory dwelling units, among others.
- Meet with County Planning officials to discuss expanded code enforcement activities.
- Consider zoning code amendments to expand housing choices such as reduced lot size, reduced floor area, reduced setbacks.
- Consider a live/work zoning code amendment to allow residents to operate a low impact business, such as a one chair beauty salon, from their home.
- Assess development of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Forth and Foster suggested inviting persons who are knowledgeable of DDA's to speak to the Village Council on the benefits and implementation process. Forth suggested consideration should be given to including the County Fairgrounds in the district, if possible. Extension of the Village's sanitary sewer to serve the fairgrounds property should be considered as well.
- Development a comprehensive streetscape plan for Main Street with the help of a consultant. Mary Jo McElroy indicated that Beth McCarthy may have a streetscape plan that had been previously completed. McElroy will reach out to McCarthy.
- Work with the Manistee County Chamber of Commerce to attract business to the Village.
- Form a subcommittee to review public park improvements and potential property acquisition.
- Consider a zoning code amendment to establish greenstrip landscaping requirements along the Main Street right-of-way. The intent would be to standardize a consistent appearance along the roadway.
- Develop a complete streets policy.

The Planning Commission members, together with people in attendance, discussed housing issues impacting the Village. Foster mentioned how short-term rentals remove housing units that could otherwise be rented by permanent residents who could then work in this area. Greg Carlson indicated he owns lots along Mills Street that he would like to develop with residential units. Carlson suggested amending the zoning code to permit smaller lots and/or smaller unit sizes in an effort to provide more affordable housing units. Suchocki suggested the Village should consider tiny homes. The group discussed advantages and disadvantages of tiny homes. Foster mentioned there may be an area on the east end of the Village and planned for multi-use that could be a possible location for tiny homes.

Old Business:

None

Public Comment:

None

Village of Onekama Planning Commission

March 10, 2026

Page 3

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Christopher Forth, Chair

Village of Onekama Planning Commission