

**Au Train Township, Planning Commission
Special Meeting**

Thursday, June 25, 2026 – 6:00pm

Au Train Township Hall - N7569 Spruce St – Au Train, MI 49806

MINUTES

- **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair LaCombe at 6:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
- **ROLL CALL** – Members present: Chair Scott LaCombe, Secretary Alexandra Free, Member John Carr. Excused: Vice Chair Jesse Cadwell. Member Wyatt Seaberg

Others present: Zoning Administrator Donna Shields, Sary Ramirez

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Motion by Carr, second by Free to approve agenda as presented. Motion Carried
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion by Free, second by Carr to approve minutes of the June 11, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting. Motion Carried
- **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES** – ZA Shields gave updates on the latest zoning activity. Report is on file at the Township Hall and on the website.
- **PUBLIC COMMENT** – None
- **BOARD COMMENTS** – None
- **PUBLIC HEARINGS** –

- a **Cory Cole/Duane Newton requesting Conditional Use Permit to operate a short-term rental at N7566 Spruce, Au Train, Parcel ID# 001-362-009-00**

Chair LaCombe opened the hearing at 6:06 pm and called upon the Zoning Administrator to present the staff report.

ZA Shields presented a summary of her staff report. The report had been shared with the commissioners via email prior to the hearing.

Chair LaCombe opened the floor to the applicant to present their request.

Sary Ramirez was present representing the applicant. Ms. Ramirez stated she was a real estate agent and manages several rentals for Mr. Cole and would be managing this as well if approved. Ms. Ramirez commented on ZA Shields staff report mention of concerns for the bedroom window sizing that, this request was much the same as the request the Planning Commission had previously approved for Mr. Kroupa to operate a short-term rental in a mobile home he

owns. She stated that the owner, Mr. Newton had already replaced the 32" doors bringing them up to code to 36" width.

Chair LaCombe opened the public comment period

There were no public comments to be heard in person.

Written comments were received from Mr. Rex Cole and shared with the Commission prior to the hearing via email. Mr. Cole was in favor of the rental being approved. He states that he agrees with how the Township is keeping the short-term rentals clustered in the Town Development district.

Za Shields noted there were several other written comments, all received from the parcel owner, however they unfortunately arrived after the written comment deadline of noon the Tuesday prior the hearing.

Chair LaCombe closed the public comment period and hearing at 6:16pm

Board discussions centered around the ZA's concerns with the bedroom windows as noted in the Staff Report. Under the zoning ordinance amendments adopted 10/30/25, occupancy for the short-term rental is calculated based on the number of "legal" bedrooms plus two per finished floor. It was noted that part of the reason the use of the term "legal" was added to the regulations was to ensure that rooms being used as bedrooms met code for safety reasons, i.e. that they had proper egress per building code.

ZA Shields indicated that in conversation with the Alger County Building Administrator, Joe Cilc, Mr. Cilc had indicated that older mobile homes bedroom windows do not meet current code. At the time of manufacture, HUD did not require the sizing for egress. While the homes were legal when built, by changing the use of the non-conforming dwelling, it should now be required to meet current code.

The Planning Commission members felt that the bedroom windows should be examined by the building administrator to ensure they are adequate size before further discussing this application. If the windows do not meet code for proper egress, then the owner can discuss with Mr. Cilc as to what can be done to remedy this. If the applicant could then bring in either a certificate of occupancy or letter from Mr. Cilc stating that the windows met code, then the application can be added to the next scheduled planning commission meeting for determination.

Ms. Ramirez made the argument that this application for short-term rental was exactly the same as the application previously heard and approved for Mr. Kroupa. That the application was nearly word for word identical and was requesting the use of a mobile home that is in nearly as much disrepair as Mr. Newton's, yet Mr. Kroupa was approved without any need to prove the windows met code.

ZA Shields explained that the disrepair had nothing to do with this. That we realize the property is a work in progress in so far as repairs and cosmetics. This was strictly to do with the sizing of the windows. Mr. Kroupa's windows weren't a concern as they are notably larger. Mr. Newton's

windows, while not physically measured, do not appear to be large enough to allow for egress per code and therefore are a concern. Ms. Ramirez argued this was discrimination.

Motion by Carr, second by LaCombe to table the decision for the use of short-term rental for parcel 001-362-009-00 at N7566 Spruce in Au Train until the applicant can provide written documentation from the Alger County Building administrator, Joe Cilc that the bedroom windows meet code for proper egress.

Roll call vote: Carr: Yes, LaCombe: Yes, Free: Yes. Motion carried 3-0

- **OLD BUSINESS** – None
- **NEW BUSINESS** – Schedule CUP hearing for Layton/Prunick STR – The commissioners agreed they could add this hearing the special meeting of July 23, 2026 that was previously scheduled to hear the CUP for STR on the Guinnup property. It is still under the timeline for notification. Both hearings will be held then on July 23, 2026 at 6pm.
- **CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS** – None
- **PUBLIC COMMENT** – None
- **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR COMMENT** – None
- **BOARD COMMENT** – None
- **NEXT MEETING** – July 16, 2026 at 6pm for further work on the zoning amendments with CUPPAD. It was noted that Ali Free will not be in attendance at the July 16th meeting.
- **ADJOURN** – Motion by Free, second by LaCombe to adjourn at 6:40pm. Motion Carried

Minutes submitted by: Donna Shields, Recording Secretary, to the Au Train Township Planning Commission

Approved: July 23, 2026

Signed: _____ on file _____
Donna Shields – Recording Secretary

Signed: _____ on file _____
Alexandra Free - Secretary