

Gerrish Township (GT) Planning Commission (GTPC) Annual Report January - December 2024

SUMMARY. This Annual Report covers the period of Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024.

- **Personnel:** There was 1 one vacant position from Jan 1 – Jul 31, 1 term expired, 1 reappointment, and 1 new appointment.
 - Tom Barber was reappointed (7/1/24 – 7/1/27);
 - Brad Gibson was appointed to a vacant position (8/1/24 – 8/1/27);
 - Terry Newton (GT Board [GTB] Ex Officio Member) term ended (11/20/24).
- **Meetings:** 12 meetings were held in person with virtual Zoom participation.
 - Regular Meetings – 6 (1/11, 3/21, 5/16, 7/11, 9/ 12, & 11/14);
 - Special Meetings – 3 (2/8 [No Quorum], 4/25, & 6/13);
 - Public Hearings – 3 (2 on 4/25, & 6/13).
- **Site Plan Reviews:** Four Site Plans (SPs) were reviewed that consisted of 4 Preliminary SP Reviews (PSPRs), 3 Final SP Reviews (FSPRs), and 2 Public Hearings (PHs), to include the following:
 - Building Addition – Jim’s Collision, [PSPR]; In progress.
 - Storage Building – Northern Metal Roofs, [PSPR, FSPR]. GTPC approved.
 - Mini-Storage (135 Units) – Higgins Lake Boat & RV Storage, [PSPR, PH, FSPR]. GTB approved; and
 - Mini-Storage (241 Units) – Higgins Lake Storage, [PSPR, PH, FSPR]. Gerrish Township Board (GTB) approved.
- **Re-Zoning Reviews:** There was 1 review for re-zoning.
 - Recommended a portion of a parcel be Re-Zoned from Low Density Residential (R-2) to Local Commercial District (C-1). GTB approved.
- **Master Plan (MP) Review:** Began review for possible update, will continue in 2025.
- **Zoning Ordinance (ZO) Review:** Several items in the ZO were identified for possible modifications, to include; multiple definitions, Shoreline Stabilization, Manufactured Housing, and Mini-Storage Facilities. They were sent to the GT Attorney for legal review.
- **New Ordinance Development:** Three potential new ordinances are being considered. Two are continued from 2023 (Short-Term Rental Ordinance [STRO], and Septic System Ordinance [SSO]), and one was initiated in 2024 (Renewable Energy Development Ordinance [REDO]). The work on all them will continue in 2025. They are summarized as follows:
 - **SSO:** A preliminary review of Michigan Septic Ordinance-related regulations and proposed Legislative Bills was conducted. Other Townships SSOs that have been adopted or are being considered were reviewed. The GTPC is currently creating a draft of a possible GT SSO to be submitted to the GTB for consideration in 2025.
 - **STRO:** A preliminary review of Michigan STRO-related regulations and proposed Legislative Bills was conducted. GTPC members reviewed and met with neighboring Townships that have adopted a STRO or working on one. A possible STRO draft and checklist of administrative tasks were developed and will be submitted to the GTB for their consideration in 2025.
 - **REDO:** The Michigan Public Act 233 of 2023 that went into effect Nov 29, 2024 pertaining to local ordinances concerning future renewable energy developments was reviewed. Further GTPC action(s) on this matter are to be determined in 2025.

Minutes of all the meetings were approved and posted online at <https://gerrishtownship.org/minutes/>.

The details of all the above are provided below by topic.

KEY POSITIONS.

<u>Chair</u>	<u>Vice Chair</u>	<u>Secretary</u>
Barber	Purkey	Briggs

DEPARTURES.

Terry Newton	Ex Officio Term Expired 11/20/24	Last Mtg on 11/14/24
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REAPPOINTMENTS.

Tom Barber	Reappointed (3-yrs)	7/1/24
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NEW MEMBERS.

Brad Gibson	Appointed (3-yrs)	8/1/24	First Mtg on 9/12/24
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TERMS EXPIRING IN 2025

Mike Briggs	Expires	7/1/25
Mike Purkey	Expires	7/1/25

MEETINGS HELD.

Public Hearings.

4/25/24 PSPR for Higgins Lake Boat & RV Storage – Parcel No. 72-004-003-025-0090 (Zamarron).
4/25/24 PSPR for Higgins Lake Storage – Parcel No. 72-004-003-025-0070 (Kemerer).
6/13/24 Re-Zoning Request – Parcel No. 72-004-015-008-0300 (Ostling).

Special Meetings.

2/8/24 PSPR for Higgins Lake Storage – Parcel No. 72-004-003-025-0070 (Kemerer). **[NO QUORUM]**
4/25/24 PSPR for Higgins Lake Storage – Parcel No. 72-004-003-025-0070 (Kemerer).
PSPR for Higgins Lake Boat & RV Storage – Parcel No. 72-004-003-025-0090 (Zamarron).
6/13/24 Re-Zoning Request – Parcel No. 72-004-015-008-0300 (Ostling).

Monthly Meetings. Six Regularly Monthly Meetings (1/11, 3/21, 5/16, 7/11, 9/ 12, & 11/14) were held on the 2nd Thurs. of the odd Month at 7:00 p.m. All meetings were held in person and with virtual participation via Zoom video teleconference. The meeting attendance is summarized in Table 1 for all meetings (Regular, Special, and Public Hearings).

Table 1. GTPC 2024 Meeting Attendance Summary. Legend: X = Attended; E = Excused Absence; V = Virtually Attended (via Zoom); NR = Not Required; and BZA = Building & Zoning Administrator.

MTG DATE (2024)	MTG TYPE	# BOARD MBRS ATT'D	QUORUM	Gerrish Township Planning Commission							Jason Jansen (BZA)	# CITIZENS ATT'D	# ATT'D VIA ZOOM
				Val Andreev	Tom Barber	Mike Briggs	Brad Gibson	Terry Newton (GTB Ex Officio)	Mike Purkey	Greg Semack			
1/11	Regular	4/6	Yes	X	E (V)	X		X	X	E (V)	X	2	2
2/8	Special	3/6	No	E	E (V)	X		X	X	E (V)	X	5	2
3/21	Regular	4/6	Yes	X	E (V)	X		X	X	E (V)	X	9	3
4/25	Public Hearing	5/6	Yes	X	X	X		X	X	E (V)	X	6	2
4/25	Public Hearing	5/6	Yes	X	X	X		X	X	E (V)	X	6	2
4/25	Special	5/6	Yes	X	X	X		X	X	E (V)	X	6	2
5/16	Regular	4/6	Yes		X	X		E	X	X	X	3	0
6/13	Public Hearing	4/6	Yes	E	X	X		X	E	X	NR	4	0
6/13	Special	4/6	Yes	E	X	X		X	E	X	NR	4	0
7/11	Regular	6/6	Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	2	0
9/12	Regular	7/7	Yes	X	X	X	X (1st)	X	X	X	X	3	5
11/14	Regular	6/7	Yes	X	X	X	X	X (Last)	X	E (V)	NR	1	1
TOTAL	12			8/12	9/12	12/12	2/2	11/12	10/12	5/12	9/12	51	14
CURRENT TERM EXPIRES				7/1/26	7/1/27	7/1/25	8/1/27	11/20/24	7/1/25	7/1/26			

REVIEWS. Several GTPC Reviews were continued from 2023 or initiated in 2024. They include; four SPRs, one Re-Zoning Request Review, the start of a GT MP Review, and a GT ZO Review.

SITE PLAN REVIEWS. One SPR from 2023 was withdrawn. Four SPs were reviewed that consisted of 4 PSPRs, 3 FSPRs, and 2 PHs, to include the following:

- Building Addition – Jim’s Collision, [PSPR];
- Storage Building – Northern Metal Roofs, [PSPR, FSPR]. GTPC approved.
- Mini-Storage (135 Units) – Higgins Lake Boat & RV Storage, [PSPR, PH, FSPR]. GTB approved.
- Mini-Storage (241 Units) – Higgins Lake Storage, [PSPR, PH, FSPR]. GTB approved;

The details for these reviews are contained in the official Meeting Minutes and are summarized below.

SPR – Building Addition – Jim’s Collision (No. 72-004-001-021-0140). [IN PROGRESS]

Description: Building additions to Jim’s Collision located at 55 W. Federal Hwy, zoned as a General Commercial District (C-2). The proposal is to expand the business in two phases: Phase 1, construct a 60’ x 56’ x 16’ building addition attached to the northwest end of the current Auto Body Shop & Office that would primarily be used to store parts; and Phase 2, add a second addition (size to be determined) on the southwest side at a later date. A front yard set-back variance approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is required for this SPR.

Sketch Review: 4/14/22, (Briggs, Denlinger, Newton, & Ostling).

Variance: 10/16/23, Required variance approved by the ZBA.

Prelim Review: 5/16/24, (Barber, Briggs, Purkey, & Semack).

Public Hearing: Not applicable.

Final Review: To Be Determined (TBD).

Status: Awaiting further action from the applicant. Carried over into 2025.

SPR – Storage Building – Northern Metal Roofs (No’s. 72-004-001-025-0070 & 72-004-001-025-0075).

[APPROVED]

Description: Construction of a storage building (2,400 sqft, 30’ x 80’ x 19’) for Northern Michigan Metal Roofing (NMMR) located at 635 W. Federal Hwy.

Sketch Review: Not applicable.

Prelim Review: 6/13/24, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack).

Public Hearing: Not Applicable.

Final Review: 7/11/24, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, Purkey, & Semack).

Status: GTPC approved (6-0) with conditions on 7/14/24, pending approval by the GT BZA. Conditions were later met and approved by the BZA.

SPR – Mini-Storage – Higgins Lake Boat & RV Storage (No. 72-004-003-025-0090), (Zamarron).

[APPROVED]

Description: Construction of several hundred min-storage units on approximately 10 acres of a currently vacant wooded lot in two phases on the east side of N. Cut Rd., near the intersection of W. Federal Hwy. Phase I consists of 135 units in 4 buildings of various sizes. The proposed Phase II build will be determined later, and would consist of an up to 250 additional units of similar size and dimensions. This is a Special Land Use (SLU) case that requires the approval of the GTB.

Sketch Review: Not applicable.

Prelim Review: 3/21/24, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber & Semack [via Zoom]).

Public Hearing: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).

Prelim Review: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).

Final Review: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).

Status: GTPC approved (5-0) – Recommended approval to GTB, 4/25/24.

GTB Final Approval – Approved on 5/14/24.

SPR – Mini-Storage – Higgins Lake Storage (No. 72-004-003-025-0070), (Kemerer). [APPROVED]

Description: Construction of approximately 241 small-sized mini-storage units among 7 buildings in two Phases on approximately 7 acres of a vacant wooded lot located at 11926 Ivy Rd., that was for sale by Harold O & Brenda Denise Ogren Trust. The property was purchased by the applicants after the approval of this SP. This is a SLU case that requires the approval of the GTB.

Sketch Review: 11/9/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack [via Zoom]).

Discussion: 1/11/24, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber & Semack [via Zoom]).

Prelim Review: 2/8/24, (Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber [via Zoom]). **[NO QUORUM]**

Prelim Review: 3/21/24, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber & Semack [via Zoom]).

Public Hearing: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).

Prelim Review: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).

Final Review: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).

Status: GTPC approved (5-0) – Recommended approval to GTB, 4/25/24.

GTB Final Approval – Approved on 5/14/24.

SPR – Mini-Storage (No. 72-004-022-002-0240), (Kemerer). [WITHDRAWN]

Description: Construction of approximately 200 small-sized mini-storage units in multiple buildings on a vacant wooded lot just south of Robinson Lake Rd.
Sketch Review: 11/9/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack [via Zoom]).
Status: 2/8/24, Withdrawn to focus on the Higgins Lake Storage project.

RE-ZONING REQUEST REVIEW.

Re-Zoning – Low Density Residential District (R-2) to Local Commercial District (C-1) (No. 72-004-015-008-0320), (Ostling). [APPROVED]

Description: Re-Zone the R-2 zoned portion of this parcel back to its previous zoned designation as C-1 to match the zoning of the other portion of this parcel and other neighboring lots in the area. This portion of the parcel was originally designated as R-2 as part of a larger piece of property that was split into multiple parcels around 2005 and re-zoned as C-1 shortly after Mr. Ostling purchased it on the premise that it was to be Re-Zoned as C-1. However, it was reverted back to R-2 6-months later following an appeal by the original owner. This is a SLU case that requires the approval of the GTB.
Sketch Review: 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).
Prelim Review: 5/16/24, (Barber, Briggs, Purkey, & Semack).
Public Hearing: 6/13/24, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack).
Prelim Review: 6/13/24, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack).
Final Review: 7/11/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
Status: GTPC approved (6-0) – Recommended approval to GTB, 7/11/24.
GTB Final Approval – Approved on 8/13/24.

MASTER PLAN REVIEW. The GT MP was last reviewed for an update in May 2019, and is due for the another periodic 5-yr Review to determine if an update or new MP is required. Discussions were held during the meetings on 9/12 and 11/14 concerning the process. This Review will be carried over into 2025.

ZONING ORDINANCE (ZO) REVIEW. There were no cancellations, modifications, or new additions to the ZO during this period. Several modifications to ZO under consideration (see below) were carried over from 2023, to include; multiple definitions, Shoreline Stabilization, Manufactured Housing, and Mini-Storage Facilities. The recommended modifications were sent to the GT Attorney for legal review.

ZO Definitions – Modified/Added.

Proposed: Modify Definition – Accessory Buildings, delete “Prefabricated storage of”;
Add New Definitions – Clear Vision Area, Decorative Landscape Element / Aka Preliminary Landscape Resolution, High Water Mark, Manufactured Home, Manufactured Housing Community, Modular Home, Park Model RVs, and Tiny House. These definition changes will be presented at a Public Hearing with other recommended changes to the ZO at a later date.
Initial Review: 11/10/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
Review: 7/11/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
Public Hearing: TBD.
Status: Carried over into 2025.

Mobile Home Age Requirement – Articles 3 & 4. [CLOSED]

- Proposed:* In response to a recent request, the GT BZA identified that the GT ZO requirements for Mobile Homes (vice Modular and Manufactured Homes) that are contained in GT ZO Articles 3 (*Zoning District Regulations*) & 4 (*General Provisions*) do not address age limits. State authorities (not the GT BZA) conduct the final building inspection for approval of Mobile Homes at the factory. The GTPC & GT BZA want to determine how to best ensure any future Mobile Homes brought into GT are safe and adhere to the intent of the GT MP.
- Initial Review:* 11/10/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
- Review:* 1/12/23, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
- Review:* 9/14/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 11/11/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 1/11/24, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 2/8/24, (Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber [via Zoom]). **[NO QUORUM]**
- Review:* 7/11/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
- Status:* Closed. Decision made to keep as is, and add new definitions.

Shoreline Stabilization – Article 20, Section 20.12.B. [IN PROGRESS]

- Proposed:* Clarify the approval authority and process to address problems of shoreline stabilization that are not resolvable with solutions allowed by the ZO, Article 20 (*Supplemental Provisions*), Section 20.12.B (*Higgins Lake Shoreline Stabilization, Requirements*). Jason Jansen (GT BZA) received recommendations (Ref: Letter to GT BZA, dated Jun 7, 2023) from GT Attorney Mr. Scott Hess (Hess Law Office, P.C.) with the recommended ordinance change to add an additional paragraph in ZO Section 20.12 to permit general maintenance, and change verbiage of “Site Planning Authority” to “GTPC”.
- Initial Review:* 7/14/22, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 9/8/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 11/10/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
- Review:* 1/12/23, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
- Review:* 9/14/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 11/9/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 7/11/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
- Public Hearing* TBD.
- Status:* Carried over into 2025.

NEW ORDINANCES UNDER CONSIDERATION. Three potential new ordinances are being considered. Two are continued from 2023, STRO and SSO. One was initiated in 2024, REDO. The work on all them will continue in 2025. The details for each are summarized below.

Septic Ordinance (SO) – New Ordinance To Be Determined. [IN PROGRESS]

- Proposed:* The GTPC was asked by the GTB to appoint two GTPC members to work with Lyon Township to develop a proposed a SO that will require inspections, repairs, and replacement where necessary. A preliminary review of Michigan SO-related regulations and proposed Legislative Bills was conducted. Other Townships SO that have been adopted or are being considered were reviewed. The GTPC is currently creating a draft of a possible GT SO to be submitted to the GTB for consideration.

- Initial Review:* 8/11/22, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 9/8/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 11/10/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
- Review:* 7/13/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack).
- Review:* 9/14/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack.).
- Review:* 11/9/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 1/11/24, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).
- Status:* Carried over into 2025.

Short-Term Rentals (STR) Ordinance – New Ordinance To Be Determined. [IN PROGRESS]

- Proposed:* The GTB has expressed an interest in adopting a STRO for GT. The GTPC conducted a preliminary review of Michigan STRO-related regulations and proposed Legislative Bills. GTPC members reviewed and met with neighboring Townships that have adopted a STRO or working on one. A possible STRO draft and checklist of administrative tasks were developed and are to be submitted to the GTB for their consideration in 2025.
- Initial Review:* 11/10/22, (Barber, Briggs, Newton, Ostling, & Purkey).
- Review:* 7/13/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack).
- Review:* 9/14/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey, & Semack).
- Review:* 11/11/23, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 1/11/24, (Andreev, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Barber & Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 4/25/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).
- Review:* 5/16/24, (Barber, Briggs, Purkey & Semack).
- Review:* 6/13/24, (Barber, Briggs, Newton & Semack).
- Review:* 7/11/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Newton, Purkey & Semack).
- Review:* 9/12/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Gibson, Newton, Purkey & Semack).
- Review:* 11/14/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Gibson, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).
- Status:* Carried over into 2025.

Renewable Energy Ordinance (REO). [IN PROGRESS]

- Proposed:* The GTB tasked the GTPC to provide recommendations for GT action concerning the development of a REO. Michigan Public Act (PA) 233 of 2023 went into effect Nov 29, 2024 concerning control for certain utility-scale renewable energy facilities (solar, wind, and energy storage [battery]). Their control will then fall under the Michigan Public Service Commission. Hence, the development of such renewable energy facilities may completely bypass the approval of townships and local units of government. There are some exceptions if there is a “workable ordinance” such as a “Compatible REO (CREO)” that is in place and meets certain zoning provisions. The Michigan Township Authority believes there are areas in the implementation of this Act that need to be clarified. GT does not have a CREO. The following three possible actions are under consideration for GT; (1) adopt a CREO, (2) adopt another type of “workable ordinance,” or (3) do nothing at this time. The GTPC needs to investigate further and get more clarification on the State regulations.
- Initial Review:* 9/12/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Gibson, Newton, Purkey, & Semack.).
- Review:* 11/14/24, (Andreev, Barber, Briggs, Gibson, Newton, & Purkey. Semack [via Zoom]).
- Status:* Carried over into 2025.

OTHER ITEMS.

General Admin.

<i>Jan</i>	Election of Officers for 2024.
<i>Jul</i>	Barber reappointed for 3-yr term.
<i>Aug</i>	Gibson appointed to vacant position (formerly Ostling) for 3-yr term.
<i>Nov</i>	Newton’s term as the GTB Ex Officio member expired.

Training & Community Outreach. Nothing significant to report.

Michael B. Briggs
Secretary

Date Approved: _____