MINUTES
CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, August 17, 2026
6:00 pm
2870 JACKSMITH AVE SE

ARTICLE 1. **Chairman Rowland called the meeting to order.**

Members Present: Chairman Rowland, Vice Chair Kraemer, Treasurer Korstange, Commissioner Cribbs, Commissioner Madiol, Commissioner Kaiser, Commissioner Lauer.
Members Absent: None.
Others Present: Planning Director Dan Swallow, Planner Kevin Garcia (McKenna), Planning Administrative Assistant Nick Govan and others listed on the sign-in sheet.

ARTICLE 2. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

ARTICLE 3. **Approve the current Agenda**

Motion was made by Treasurer Korstange to approve the current agenda.
Supported by Vice Chair Kraemer.
Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 4. **Disclose any Conflict of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest disclosed.

ARTICLE 5. **Approve the Minutes of the May 18, 2026, Meeting.**

Motion was made by Treasurer Korstange to approve the Minutes of the May 18, 2026 meeting.
Supported by Vice Chair Kraemer.
Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 6. **Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak.**

There was no one wishing to speak.

ARTICLE 7. **Case #26-3924 – Public Hearing**
Applicant: Watermark Condominium Association, C/O Acacia Group PM
Property Address: Forest Hills Golf Course/Watermark Condominiums PUD-15; a full list of addresses is detailed in Attachment 1 of the Staff Report.
Parcel Number: A full list of individual parcel numbers is detailed in Attachment 1 of the Staff Report.
Requested Action: A PUD Text amendment to the Forest Hills Golf Course/Watermark Condominiums PUD-15, Ord #10 of 1997, to amend text related to the use of speed bumps.

Planner Kevin Garcia, of the Township's consulting firm McKenna, presented the staff report. He explained the 1990 traffic impact study addendum formed the basis for the prohibition, but noted subsequent research generally shows speed bumps to be effective at reducing speeds. He found the site circulation

standard could be met, and stated the emergency-access standard could be satisfied by requiring Fire Marshal review of the size, dimensions, and required signage for any speed bumps prior to installation, noting Watermark appears to be the only PUD in the Township with this type of prohibition. He reported one letter of support and three of concern, and identified a second consideration for the Commission: whether a compelling reason exists to continue prohibiting speed bumps in this PUD when they are allowed elsewhere in the Township. He clarified the amendment itself would not install speed bumps, and recommended approval subject to the Fire Marshal review condition.

Chairman Rowland asked whether anything in the PUD prohibited stop signs on private streets; staff confirmed it did not.

Commissioner Lauer asked which users the site circulation standard was intended to protect; staff noted the ordinance covers vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and confirmed bicycles, skateboards, and scooters would be considered vehicular for this purpose.

Vice Chair Kraemer asked whether the Watermark Condominium Association represented the entire PUD, including the golf course and all private roads; staff was not certain. Vice Chair Kraemer noted the packet included only the 1990 addendum rather than the full traffic impact study referenced in the application; staff confirmed the full underlying study had not been provided. Commissioner Cribbs indicated he had additional questions regarding maintenance of removable speed bumps, but noted those were better suited to deliberation.

Chairman Rowland invited the applicant to present.

Michael Berger (4040 Watermark Road), representing the Watermark Condominium Association, addressed the Commission. He stated no other PUD in the Township contains a similar prohibition, cited ongoing speeding and a prior rollover accident despite gates installed around 2005, and stated the board's motivation was safety, noting a trial of digital speed-display signs had not been effective.

In response to questions, Berger deferred to a fellow resident for speed study data, and stated resident feedback had been mixed. He explained Watermark includes three associations, Condominium, Estate Homes, and Club Homes, under a joint board that had voted to authorize installation of speed bumps; the PUD prohibition was discovered only after the association voted, prompting the amendment application, with the Condominium Association holding roughly 56 to 57 percent of the joint board vote. Vice Chair Kraemer noted the certificate of secretary did not reflect that joint-board process, raising concern about the applicant's authority to seek an amendment affecting the full PUD. Berger stated he was not aware that resident approval would be required, describing the board as elected to make such decisions.

Korey Kiefer (2202 Watermark Drive) presented radar speed data collected over several days in May and June 2026, reporting an average speed of 28.5 mph and a maximum of 52 mph.

Motion was made by Chairman Rowland to open public comment.
Supported by Vice Chair Kraemer.
Motion carried unanimously.

John Slagter (1763 Watermark Drive) opposed the amendment, citing statutory speed limit and traffic engineering standards and raising an emergency-response concern.

Cynthia Afendoulis (5361 Prairie Home Drive) supported the amendment, noting the joint board structure and stating the amendment would only remove the prohibition, leaving installation decisions to further association discussion.

Lori Baas (1825 Watermark Drive) opposed the amendment, citing the road's existing traffic-calming features and requesting specifics on size, placement, cost, and maintenance.

John Kendall (2201 Watermark Drive) supported the amendment, noting the gates already require vehicles to stop and asking that the community be allowed to decide.

Sharon Stadler (1901 Watermark Drive) questioned the propriety of removing PUD-specific language and asked about compliance with the Township's new zoning ordinance; staff responded that new zoning does not affect existing PUDs, and Chairman Rowland noted the application predated the new ordinance and staff would follow up on its applicability.

Heidi Herbruck (5380 Tee 17 Court) opposed the amendment, citing inadequate notice of the planned installation.

Leo Ditchcreek (1712 Watermark Drive) supported the amendment, citing prior Fire Chief approval of specific speed bump specifications obtained before the prohibition was discovered.

Gerard Hickey (2019 Craftsman Court) raised a procedural objection, stating the prohibition is part of the recorded master deed and should require a membership vote rather than a board-level decision.

Alex Deyonker (1820 Watermark Drive) supported the amendment, citing the association board's fiduciary duty to act in the community's interest.

John Clark (940 Monroe Avenue SE, Grand Rapids), property manager with Acacia Group PM, described successful removable speed bump installations at other associations he manages and addressed the joint board's authority to submit the application.

Ed Young (5390 Brassie Court) opposed on procedural grounds, citing inadequate notice and the absence of a formal traffic study.

Heidi Herbruck returned to note relevant provisions of the Michigan Vehicle Code and Zoning Enabling Act, and confirmed the PUD amendment would not alter the associations' master deed bylaws.

Motion was made by Chairman Rowland to close public hearing.
Supported by Vice Chair Kraemer.
Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Rowland opened deliberation, acknowledging the speeding concern personally but stating reservations about approving the amendment without confidence that the broader membership of all three associations had a meaningful opportunity for input, drawing a comparison to the Township's recent zoning ordinance update; he stated he did not support the application as presented but was open to postponing it for further resident outreach.

Vice Chair Kraemer stated he was inclined to oppose the application, citing unconfirmed authority to bind the full PUD and a certificate of secretary that did not reflect the joint-board process described in public comment; he stated the burden should fall on the applicant to show a compelling reason to remove a longstanding provision, and found the record largely anecdotal. Treasurer Korstange, Commissioner Lauer, and Commissioner Cribbs agreed additional documentation and resident input were needed and supported postponement; Cribbs and Kaiser also questioned whether homeowner, rather than board-only, approval is required.

Planning Director Dan Swallow clarified the PUD amendment is separate from the associations' master deed bylaws, which staff had not reviewed, and would not itself alter them. Michael Kooistra, president of the Estate Homes Association board, confirmed the joint board had voted to approve the request and offered supporting documentation. Vice Chair Kraemer reiterated that the threshold concern was documented authority and asked that any submission identify the bylaw provision authorizing board action without a co-owner vote and confirm whether owners were given notice and an opportunity to vote.

Motion was made by Chairman Rowland to POSTPONE Case Number 26-3924, for a PUD Text Amendment to the Forest Hills Golf Course/Watermark Condominiums PUD-15, Ord #10 of 1997, related to the use of speed bumps, for a period not to exceed 60 days, with the following conditions:

1. **Submission of meeting minutes and legal documentation demonstrating the Watermark Condominium Association's authority to bring the amendment request forward on behalf of the joint board.**
2. **Identification of the specific bylaw provision authorizing the board to alter common road infrastructure without a vote of the co-owners.**
3. **Documentation showing whether owners were given notice and an opportunity to vote on the request.**

Supported by Vice Chair Kraemer.
Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 8. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak.

There was no one wishing to speak.

ARTICLE 9. Other Business

Chairman Rowland reported that the Township's new zoning ordinance had taken effect and thanked everyone for voting, either for or against. He highlighted this as part of the democratic process. Treasurer Korstange asked that staff and the Commission note any adjustments or amendments so they could be brought to the Township Board, noting this continual reviewing and refinement is part of the Commission's ongoing role. Chairman Rowland agreed, noting Township staff involved in the ordinance rewrite remain available for questions, and that staff would compile such notes for periodic review.

ARTICLE 10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Madiol Secretary