

Town of Black Earth
Minutes of Plan Commission Meeting
Tuesday, January 6, 2026

1. Meeting call to Order. Plan Commission Chair Steve Parrell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Plan Commission members Joann Bennett, Tom Ripp, Bruce Johnson, Pat Helmenstine, Chuck Bruhn, Peter Weil, and Clerk Stephanie Zwettler were present. Also in attendance: Levi Yoder, Barb Parrell, Jason Handel, Tom Turk, Brenda Kahl, Andrew Harris, Chris Knipfel, Kurtis Hahn, Brenda Pulvermacher, and Terry Frey.
2. Proof of Posting. An affidavit of posting was provided.
3. Approval of the Agenda. Tom Ripp moved and Bruce Johnson seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – December 2, 2025. Joann Bennett moved and Pat Helmenstine seconded the motion to approve the minutes from December 2, 2025, as presented. Motion carried.
5. Levi Yoder, north of 5250 John Wilkinson Rd – driveway construction permit. Plan Commission members reviewed the revised proposed driveway plans and the new location for one of the houses on the south-facing hillside as presented by applicant Levi Yoder. Neighbor Andrew Harris expressed concern that the TDR was approved for agricultural land and might lead to multiple outbuildings. Commission Chair Steve Parrell confirmed that there is no limit on the number of outbuildings on farms. Commission members discussed their preference for the alternative proposed by the engineering firm, which minimizes the driveway's impact on the tillable farmland. Levi Yoder cited financial constraints with the preferred route and may need to reconsider plans or sell the property.

Pat Helmenstine moved and Tom Ripp seconded the motion to table the application until further information is submitted. Motion carried.
6. Land Use Plan amendments – updating language for Transfer of Development Rights program, Conditional Use Permits, Accessory Dwelling Units. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting.
7. Discussion of future agenda items.
8. Adjourn. Joann Bennett moved and Chuck Bruhn seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Zwettler, Town Clerk