



**WILLISTOWN TOWNSHIP**  
Planning Commission Meeting  
Wednesday, February 18, 2026  
7:00 p.m.

Minutes

LOCATION: Willistown Township Building, 688 Sugartown Rd, Malvern, PA 19355

Members Present:

Cathy Rubenstone, Chair; George McHugh, Vice Chair; Warren Claytor; Erik Hetzel; Ted Leisenring; William Shoemaker

Members Absent:

Philip Foret

Township Representatives Present:

Caroline O'Connor, Director of Planning & Zoning; Mike Conrad, Yerkes Associates; John Gaadt, Gaadt Perspectives; James Powell, HRG; Mark Thompson, Esq., Lamb McErlane

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Rubenstone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve the Minutes for the regular Planning Commission meeting held on February 4, 2026. (McHugh/Claytor)

COMMENTS: None

ACTION: Passed, 6-0

**C. SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS**

1. Applicant: JCL Sterling LP & HK Industrial Blvd LLC, Z-14-24

Address: 14 Industrial Blvd

Type: Variance (ZHB)

Description: validity challenge of the Environmental Protection Ordinance and/or variances related to tree removal and replanting to construct an age restricted apartment development (ARAD)

Present: Dr. Galib (owner), Tom Kessler (HK Industrial LLC), Julie Bernstein, Esq. (attorney), Amanda Schneider (Howell Engineering)

Ms. Bernstein presented modifications to the prior ARAD plan that resulted in a reduction in density to 34 units. The presentation included information about the reduced scope of the variances requested from the Environmental Protection Ordinance and provided more information regarding the significant engineering work that was being planned for stormwater management facilities. It was noted that the applicant retained arborist John Hosback to evaluate the health of the existing woodland on the lot. Mr. Hosback concluded that the woods

are in poor condition, with 60-65% of the trees either dead or dying. The Planning Commission recognized that the entire property is wooded, and that there are significant existing stormwater challenges due to the property receiving off-site stormwater runoff from adjacent properties. Mr. Conrad noted that the construction of stormwater management facilities in steep slope areas would require a variance, and that disturbance of the Riparian Buffer Area would require a management plan. Mr. Shoemaker indicated willingness to recommend variances from the Environmental Protection Ordinance because of acceptable replacement percentages given that the entire lot is wooded; Mr. Shoemaker also noted stormwater challenges and that the revised stormwater management facilities will need to comply with codes. Mr. Thompson asked the Applicant to clarify the amendment to the application regarding the validity challenge. Ms. Bernstein stated that the substantive validity challenge is being “held in abeyance” pending the outcome of the variance application and is not being discussed “at this time.”

MOTION: To make a recommendation to approve the variance application as presented on the plan dated 01/26/2026, only as it relates to requests regarding the removal and replanting of trees on the lot. (Shoemaker/McHugh)

COMMENTS:

Keith Parsons, 117 Spruce Ln

Mr. Parsons asked if the trees would still be able to be removed if the development was not constructed. He also asked for clarification regarding permeable pavers/pavement.

Cindi Myers, 735 Hillview Rd

Ms. Myers expressed her concern over the removal of the significant number of trees on the lot, and the likelihood of the remaining trees being subject to being “blown down” because of the removal of the tree network. She also wondered if granting a variance for this property would set a precedent.

ACTION: Passed, 6-0

**D. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

1. Code Amendments

- a. Ms. O’Connor and Mr. Gaadt presented the final version of the “backyard chicken” Ordinance amendment for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

MOTION: To recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Ordinance pertaining to the keeping of backyard chickens be authorized for advertisement and adoption. (McHugh/Claytor)

COMMENTS: None

ACTION: Passed, 5-0 (Shoemaker abstained)

- b. Ms. O’Connor and Mr. Gaadt presented “Omnibus” Ordinance amendments related to sign provisions, use provisions in the Industrial District, parcel yield calculations, conservation plan requirements, and Appendix C, the stormwater management agreement for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

MOTION: To recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the “Omnibus” Ordinance amendments be authorized for advertisement and adoption. (McHugh/Claytor)

COMMENTS: None

ACTION: Passed, 5-0 (Shoemaker abstained)

**E. ANNOUNCEMENTS** – None

**F. PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 7:00 p.m., at the Township Administration Building

Respectfully submitted,

Erik Hetzel