

Pennsbury Township Planning Commission Minutes

December 10, 2025

Present: Dennis Smith, Karen Meloney, George Trammell, Joe Short, Mike Clements, Kay Ellsworth, and Dan Boyle.

Chairperson Dennis Smith called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of November 12, 2025, were presented. Amendments were offered by Kay Ellsworth. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by George Trammell, seconded by Mike Clements. The motion was passed unanimously.

Minor Subdivision Application—1514 Brintons Bridge Road (Wood)

The Planning Commission reviewed a minor subdivision application proposing the consolidation of two vacant parcels (approximately 13.25 acres and 2 acres) into a single parcel totaling approximately 15.35 acres. The applicant was not present; Township Engineer Matt Houtmann presented on their behalf.

Mr. Houtmann explained that the parcels are unimproved and that one parcel is currently landlocked. The consolidation would eliminate the landlocked condition. Engineering review comments included adjustment of building setback lines to avoid nonconformity, depiction of the ultimate right-of-way, and minor drafting corrections. All comments had been satisfactorily addressed, and no technical objections remained. A motion to approve the final subdivision plan was made by Kay Ellsworth subject to the Township Engineer's review letter. It was seconded by Joe Short and passed unanimously.

ZHB Application—4 Jacobs Way (Boglev)

Frank and Kyra Boglev appeared before the Planning Commission, represented by their attorney, Matthew McKeon, regarding an application for the construction of a two-story detached garage with a ground-level garage and a second-floor home office. The application requested dimensional variances to permit construction of the proposed accessory structure on a 4.3-acre property located in the R-2 Zoning District.

The requested variances included: (1) permission for an accessory structure to be located within the front yard; (2) permission for an accessory structure to be located closer to the property line than the

principal dwelling; (3) a variance from the maximum permitted ground-floor area for accessory structures, proposing 624 square feet, which the applicant characterized as a *de minimis* deviation; and (4) a height variance to permit a structure with a height of approximately 22 feet where 15 feet is permitted.

The applicants cited existing driveway access, steep slopes, a water easement, stormwater management considerations, and the preservation of mature trees as justification for the proposed location of the structure. Discussion included the potential impacts to steep slopes, the proposed height of the accessory structure, the calculation of ground-floor area (including whether deck areas should be included), landscaping, and potential visual impacts on neighboring properties. The applicants indicated a willingness to provide additional landscaping and noted that letters of support had been received from two of the three adjacent property owners. They indicated they would make their best efforts to secure the support from the third neighbor.

The Planning Commission discussed concerns related to steep slopes and agreed that any construction should minimize disturbance to those areas.

A motion was made by Kay Ellsworth and seconded by Mike Clements to recommend approval of the Zoning Hearing Board application, conditioned upon extending down the footing of the left rear corner of the proposed structure (viewing it from the front) in order to avoid disturbance of steep slopes. The motion carried unanimously.

ZHB and CU Applications—800 and 1000 Hickory Hill Road (Renninger)

Applicants John and Jill Renninger presented their applications through their attorney, Max O’Keefe. Also present was Tom Schreier of Hillcrest Associates. The Planning Commission reviewed a proposed four-lot subdivision that would create four residential lots from two existing parcels totaling approximately 50.4 acres. A portion of the property is subject to a conservation easement held by the Brandywine Conservancy and is located within the Brandywine Battlefield Overlay District, thereby requiring conditional use approval.

The applicants also requested variances related to the following: (1) the location of accessory structures forward of principal dwellings; (2) the maximum cumulative ground-floor area of accessory structures; and (3) the height of accessory structures, including agricultural barns.

The applicants described the agricultural use of the property and discussed the proposed removal and replacement of existing barns, equipment storage needs, soil suitability, solar orientation, and efforts to minimize impacts to steep slopes and scenic views. Judi Wilson, Chair of the Historical Commission, provided comments regarding potential viewshed impacts, the placement and scale of barns, and architectural considerations within the Brandywine Battlefield Overlay District.

Several neighboring property owners were present and participated in the discussion, which addressed agricultural functionality, the proportionality of accessory structures relative to the large-lot acreage, conservation easement limitations, landscaping, and visibility of proposed new structures from Hickory Hill Road and neighboring properties.

Due to the scope and complexity of the applications, all parties unanimously agreed to continue the matter until the January 14, 2026 Planning Commission meeting to allow the applicants additional time to review and, if necessary, revise and submit their applications.

Comprehensive Plan Project Process Overview

Karen Meloney discussed the upcoming update to the Township Comprehensive Plan and provided a status update regarding the task force and project kickoff.

A project kickoff meeting is planned for Tuesday, January 6, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., to be held at the Township building. Members of the Planning Commission and Historical Commission were invited to attend as observers.

The kickoff meeting will include representatives from the Township, Chester County Planning Commission, and the Brandywine Conservancy. The purpose of the meeting will be to review grant guidelines, outline the project scope and themes, summarize Township accomplishments since the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, and discuss future task force and steering committee meetings. It was noted that efforts will be made to accommodate a preference for daytime meetings when possible.

Organizational Meeting for 2026

The Planning Commission discussed scheduling its required annual organizational meeting. It was noted that the meeting is necessary to elect officers and confirm meeting dates, times, and locations for the upcoming year. Members expressed a preference to hold the organizational meeting prior to the first regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting in January, in order to allow time for coordination with the new Township administration.

After discussion, the Commission reached consensus to schedule the organizational meeting for December 29, 2025 at 5 p.m. The meeting will be limited to election of officers and any necessary organizational matters.

Members were asked to notify the Chair in advance if there were additional items that should be included on the organizational meeting agenda.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Dan Boyle, Recording Secretary