

# **Pennsbury Township Planning Commission Minutes**

**January 14, 2026**

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

Chairperson Kay Ellsworth called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Kay Ellsworth recognized Dennis Smith, who recently stepped down as Chair of the Planning Commission after twelve years of service. She expressed appreciation for his leadership, dedication, and commitment to the Township. Thankfully, Mr. Smith will continue to serve as a member of the Planning Commission.

The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of December 10, 2025, were presented. Amendments were offered by Kay Ellsworth. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Dennis Smith, seconded by George Trammell. The motion was passed unanimously.

The minutes of the Planning Commission's 2026 Organizational meeting of December 29, 2025, were presented. Amendments were offered by Karen Meloney. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by George Trammell, seconded by Joe Short. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **Conditional Use Application—2 Running Fox Trail (Lisa and John Diskin)—Solar Panels**

The application was presented by Rob Santoleri, President of Terrasol Energies, Inc., with property owner Lisa Diskin in attendance. The applicants requested relief to permit the installation of solar panels on the front elevation of the residence in order to maximize solar efficiency due to the house's southern orientation. They stated that the proposed installation consists of forty-seven all-black solar panels mounted on a black metal roof to minimize visual impact. The applicants further indicated that all wiring and racking would be concealed. Applicants shared a photograph of another house on which all-black solar panels were installed on a black metal roof.

The applicants explained that installation of the panels on the ground at the rear of the property was considered; however, steep slopes and existing tree coverage would render that option cost-prohibitive. A second alternative—installation on the north-facing roof plane—was also evaluated, but would result in an estimated 50 percent reduction in energy production.

A motion was made by Mike Clements recommending that the Board of Supervisors deny the application. The motion was seconded by Karen Meloney. Upon a vote, Dennis Smith, George

Trammell, Karen Meloney, and Mike Clements voted in favor of the motion, while Joe Short and Kay Ellsworth voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of 4-2.

**Subdivision, Zoning, and Conditional Use Application—800 & 1000 Hickory Hill Road (Renninger)**

The Commission resumed its discussion of the Renninger subdivision, Zoning Hearing Board, and conditional use applications, which include multiple variance requests. This matter was continued from the Planning Commission meeting held on December 10, 2025.

Applicants John and Jill Renninger were not present but presented their applications through their attorney, Max O’Keefe. Also present was Tom Schreier of Hillcrest Associates. The applicants propose a two-lot subdivision for 800 Hickory Hill Road (Lots #1 and #2) and a two-lot subdivision for 1000 Hickory Hill Road (Lots #3 and #4). Revised plans, an updated list of variance requests, and a new request for special exception were submitted prior to the meeting, as follows:

- Lot #3 – 1) a garage (~1,400 sq ft) on a lot area of more than one acre, where the ordinance’s maximum ground-floor area for the sum of all accessory buildings is 600 sq ft, and 2) a garage height of 23’, where the ordinance’s maximum height is 15’.
- Lot #4 – 1) existing non-conforming structures of a barn and spring house (2,211 sq ft) and 2) an existing non-conforming structure height of 26’.
- Lot #4 – Special exception to no woodland disturbance or other land disturbance being permitted within the Zone One riparian buffer to widen the proposed shared driveway servicing Lots #3 and #4.
- Lot # 2 – 1) a barn, greenhouse, and pool house with a total square footage of 5,426 on a lot of more than one acre, where the ordinance’s maximum floor area for the sum of all accessory buildings is 600 sq ft; 2) an accessory structure located no further forward on the tract or lot than the front building line of the principal building; and 3) a barn height of 22’, where the ordinance’s maximum height for an accessory structure is 15’.

A vote was taken on variance requests for Lots #3 and #4 as well as the special exception request for Lot #4, and the PC unanimously recommended that the BoS support the requests.

The applicants reported that they moved the barn on Lot #2 farther back into the lot and reduced the requested building height from 25’ to 22’ to lessen its visual impact. Discussion primarily focused on the proposed barn’s size, height, and location. Concerns raised included potential impacts on scenic viewsheds, historic resources, and neighborhood character.

A letter dated January 12, 2026, from neighboring property owners opposing the proposed barn on Lot #2 was entered into the record.

A vote was taken on the variance request for the location and the individual square footage of the pool house and greenhouse on Lot #2, and the PC unanimously recommended that the BoS support it.

No vote was taken on the Lot #2 barn at this meeting. At the applicants' request, and with the Commission's agreement, revised plans may be submitted for further review at a subsequent meeting prior to consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

### **Comprehensive Plan Update**

Karen Meloney provided a report on the first meeting of the Task Force working on an update to the Comprehensive Plan, including the scope of work and schedule, public participation and stakeholder engagement efforts, and preparations for the public meeting scheduled for March 19, 2026. No formal action was taken.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Dan Boyle, Recording Secretary