

Heidelberg Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Donald Billig called the special joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to order at 6:37 pm on February 26, 2024.

Location

Heidelberg Township Municipal Building
6272 Route 309
New Tripoli, PA 18066
and via
Zoom

Attendees

Planning Commission Chairman:	Donald Billig
Planning Commission Secretary:	Christine "Teena" Bailey
Planning Commission Member:	Lucas Savage (via Zoom)
Planning Commission Member:	Patricia "Patti" Fenstermacher
Planning Commission Member:	Kevin Klase
Planning Commission Alternate Member:	Virginia Harwood
Planning Commission Alternate Member:	Jeffrey Kistler
Board of Supervisors Chairman:	David Fink
Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman:	Steven Bachman
Board of Supervisors Member:	Jonathan Jakum
Administrator/Secretary/Zoning Officer/EMC:	Dawn Didra
PC Recording Secretary, Admin Assistant:	Katie Fabian
Environmental Planning & Design Representative:	AJ Schwartz
Absent:	PC Vice Chairman, Priscilla Brennan PC Member, Matthew Schneider

Public Comment on Agenda

None.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion by Christine "Teena" Bailey, seconded by Patricia "Patti" Fenstermacher to approve the meeting minutes of the January 29, 2024 Regular Planning Commission meeting. Motion Carried.

A motion by Christine "Teena" Bailey, seconded by Patricia "Patti" Fenstermacher to approve the meeting minutes of the January 29, 2024 Re-Organization Planning Commission meeting with corrections. Motion Carried.

Unfinished Business

None.

Other Business:

Donald Billig welcomed new Planning Commission member Kevin Klase.

Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan review with AJ Schwartz from Environmental Planning & Design:

EPD introduced two potential Zoning Overlays to support new and some existing uses as part of the MMCP to the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. A Regional Use Overlay District will house a handful of regionally significant uses. The Airport Safety Overlay will address FAA requirements related to airports. These overlays do not encompass the entire districts, nor do they supersede the uses permitted as per the base zoning districts that underlay them. As advised by EPD, some uses require allocation in all districts, such as mineral extraction, forestry, and the FCC interstate commerce requirements; EPD continues to advise on the legal requirements for each land use.

Conditions for uses will be added to mitigate unwanted impacts on the future of Heidelberg Township (as seen from a planning perspective, ie. impacts relating to environmental protection, community values, safety, and open space preservation). EPD requested the Board and Planning Commission re-evaluate existing uses as Permitted, by Special Exception, or Conditional use. For example, the board decided to change 'Auto Sales' to a 'Permitted' use (previously a 'Special Exception') since there are already conditions within the Rural Village District to mitigate impacts (ie. limitations on impervious coverage).

Re-zoning procedures will be created, including a re-zoning request application.

Additionally, as required by the grant/funding for the MMCP an Official Map will be created. The Official Map will identify future potential land needs of Heidelberg Township relating to, but not limited to: open space, future parks, routes and expansions of roads, crosswalks/sidewalks, trails, other recreation space, school district expansion/plans, sewer & water capacity, and emergency management. The selection of land as part of an Official Map will allow the township 'the right of first refusal' if that land becomes available for sale. (This is not 'eminent domain' nor a demand for land.) Becky Bradley, executive director of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and a resident of Heidelberg Township, informed the Board there are grants available for projects that may be forthcoming after the formation of the Official Map, including funding for crosswalks/sidewalks for the Rec fields. She also recommended contacting NWL SD, PennDOT, and the Lehigh County Authority for their contributions to the Official Map.

EPD continues to guide the townships of Lowhill, Washington, Weisenberg, Lynn, Heidelberg, and the borough of Slatington individually to establish zoning overlays, an Official Map and the designations of uses and their conditions. The next group meeting of the townships, borough, and EPD for the MMCP will be on April 2, 2024, at the Washington Township Municipal Building.

Follow up:

A March Planning Commission meeting with the following objectives:

- Submission of preferred 'use definitions' on the EPD Project Portal.
- Collaboration to create Heidelberg Township's future 'Official Map'

Adjournment

A motion was made by "Teena" Bailey, seconded by Patricia "Patti" Fenstermacher to adjourn the meeting at 8:27pm. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Fabian, Recording Secretary