

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2025

Commissioners in attendance:

Denny Robinson, Dale Graves, Eric Miller, JR Crushong, Gary Deardorff

Others in attendance:

Dominic Picarelli, KPI Technology; Lynda Beckwith, PMCA

CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting called to order by Denny Robinson, Chairman, at 7:00pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **MOTION to APPROVE MARCH minutes, by Gary Deardorff, seconded by Dale Graves.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SKETCH PLANS

- **Lisette Quickel/Karen Germann – 910 Mt. Carmel Road – 2nd Dwelling**
- The Applicants presented a sketch plan to build a second home on her parents' 21-acre property, citing a desire to care for aging family members. The plan did not propose a subdivision but sought to construct a separate dwelling on the same lot.
- **Zoning and Ordinance Concerns:**

Commissioners discussed township ordinances that currently prohibit more than one principal use (e.g., a separate residence) on a single parcel within agricultural (Ag) and open space zones. While earlier conversations suggested a possible ordinance amendment to allow dual dwellings, no such change had been adopted at the time of this meeting.

 - **Accessory Dwelling Limitations:** Staff clarified that under current rules, additions to a home for family members can include bedrooms, bathrooms, and living areas, but cannot include full kitchens or cooking facilities. Once a full kitchen is added, it is treated as a separate dwelling unit.
 - **Enforcement Challenges:** Commissioners acknowledged that multiple properties in the township have circumvented the single-dwelling rule by connecting structures with roofs or building "in-law suites" that quietly evolve into independent apartments.
 - **Precedents in Neighboring Townships:** Other municipalities allow "granny flats" or removable mobile-home-style dwellings through annual permits and inspections. These often require medical documentation and sewage hookups shared with the primary residence.

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2025

- **Clean & Green Considerations:** The applicant raised questions about how the project would affect their Clean & Green tax status. While Clean & Green officials reportedly indicated informally that it would be fine, the Planning Commission noted that subdivision or land development could trigger tax penalties, such as rollback taxes.
- **Subdivision Option:**
The Planning Commission concluded that under current zoning, the applicant would need to formally subdivide the parcel to construct a second dwelling. They discussed potential panhandle lot configurations and setbacks, emphasizing that any subdivision must be approved by the Board of Supervisors. A panhandle would need at least 25 feet of road frontage, though 50 feet is more commonly accepted.
- **Next Steps:** The applicant was advised to draft a more formal plan, consider septic requirements, and consult with township staff, the county, and possibly the zoning hearing board. A new septic system and appropriate soil testing would be necessary for the proposed home.

PLANS

- **Willow Farms Preliminary Subdivision**
- The Planning Commission formally voted to recommend denial of the Willow Farms plan due to non-responsiveness and failure to submit required documentation for two consecutive months. No representatives from the applicant were present.
- **Basis for Denial:** The motion cited outstanding concerns outlined in a March 19 KPI review letter and the absence of a formal extension request. Commissioners reaffirmed the importance of procedural compliance and maintaining accountability through established review processes.
 - **MOTION:** The Planning Commission *DENIES the Willow Farms Subdivision plan, by Gary Deardorff, seconded by Dale Graves.*
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- **Baker Subdivision – Land Swap**
- A representative appeared on behalf of the Bakers to explain a proposed land exchange between two neighboring property owners: Roxy and Sherry. The plan involved Roxy transferring 0.0309 acres to Sherry, and Sherry transferring 0.1365 acres to Roxy. The intent was to clarify lot boundaries and facilitate property access.
- **Zoning and Planning Review:**

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2025

- **Zoning Officer's Notes:** Zoning Officer noted that both properties contain structures encroaching into required setbacks. She recommended the applicants apply for certificates of non-conformance to formally document these pre-existing conditions.
- **Engineer's Comments:** The Township Engineer reported 13 minor "housekeeping" comments with no critical issues.
- **County Review Pending:** Although the county's review had not yet been received, planners agreed to move the plan forward with a conditional approval, subject to resolution of existing comments and receipt of the county's input.
- **MOTION:** The Planning Commission *RECOMMENDS CONDITIONAL APPROVAL of the Baker Property land swap, pursuant to the applicant addressing KPI's engineering comments dated April 11, 2025, Zoning Office comments dated April 16, 2025, and receipt of Adams County comments*, by Gary Deardorff, seconded by Eric Miller.
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- None

GUESTS

ADJOURN

- Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm by Denny Robinson, Chairman.