

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – Aug 20, 2025

Commissioners in attendance:

Denny Robinson, Dale Graves, Eric Miller, Gary Deardorff, Jim McDannell, Jed Fetter

Others in attendance:

Brandon Guiher, KPI Technology

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **MOTION to *APPROVE JULY minutes*, by James McDannell, seconded by Gary Deardorff.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SKETCH PLANS

PLANS

- **Paint the Sky Subdivision – Flohrs Church Road**

The commission reviewed a request for an extension of the **Paint the Sky subdivision plan**, which had previously been tabled twice. The applicant formally **waived the 90-day requirement** and requested an extension until **January 10, 2026**.

- **MOTION: The Planning Commission *RECOMMENDS APPROVAL of the extension request to January 10th, 2026*, by Gary Deardorff, seconded by Dale Graves.**
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- **MOTION: The Planning Commission *TABLES CONSIDERATION of the Paint the Sky Subdivision plan*, by Jed Fetter, seconded by James McDannell.**
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

- None

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NEW BUSINESS

- **Solar Ordinance with Proposed Changes**
 - **Definitions and Consistency Issues:** Members noted inconsistencies in terminology throughout the ordinance, such as interchanging terms like *applicant*, *owner*, *operator*, *developer*, and *installer*. The commission discussed the need for clear and consistent definitions and welcomed public comment urging review and correction of this language.
 - **Maintenance Responsibilities:** Concerns were raised about the **enforceability of a clause** requiring solar facilities to be maintained “in good working order” by the property owner. The commission debated whether property owners could be held responsible if the facility is owned and operated by a third party under lease. The solicitor clarified that zoning enforcement actions are always taken against the property owner, not tenants.
 - **Change from Permitted to Conditional Use:** Most discussion centered around a **proposal to reclassify solar energy facilities from a permitted use to a conditional use** in the industrial zoning district. The planning commission had originally recommended that such uses be permitted outright in industrial zones. Members reaffirmed their previous position, stating that the shift to conditional use would contradict their original recommendation and unnecessarily restrict industrial development.
 - **Spacing Requirements:** The commission reviewed a lingering clause requiring a **20-foot cartway between solar array rows**, which had previously been targeted for removal. Members agreed it should be deleted in future drafts, especially after learning that **local fire departments do not intend to access the interior of solar arrays**, rendering the spacing unnecessary.
 - **MOTION:** The Planning Commission **RECOMMENDS APPROVAL** of the *proposed new definitions and the added regulation (under Section B (1)(b)), with edits clarifying that the aforementioned section refers to Solar Energy Facilities (SEF)*, by Jed Fetter, seconded by Gary Deardorff.
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**
 - **MOTION:** The Planning Commission **RECOMMENDS DISAPPROVAL** of *proposed change from permitted to conditional use for solar facilities in industrial zoning districts*, by Jed Fetter, seconded by Dale Graves.
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

GUESTS

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ADJOURN

- Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm by Denny Robinson, Chairman.