

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – Mar 18 2026

Commissioners in attendance:

Denny Robinson, Eric Miller, JR Crushong, Gary Deardorff, Kathleen Reilly, Jed Fetter, Jim McDannell

Others in attendance:

Dominic Picarelli, KPI Technology; Lisa Trimmer, PMCA

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **MOTION to APPROVE February minutes, by Jed Fetter, seconded by Gary Deardorff.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SKETCH PLANS

- None

PLANS

- **Adams Norman Solar Land Development Plan**

The Commission revisited the Adams-Norman Solar Land Development Plan, noting that no revised plans had been submitted since the prior meeting and that Adams County had still not issued comments because county review fees apparently had not yet been paid. Members discussed the project's procedural deadlines and the applicant's extension request, which did not specify a timeframe. After discussion, the Commission recommended approval of a **60-day extension** for the applicant and separately voted to **table the land development plan until revised plans and county comments are received.**

- **MOTION: The Planning Commission RECOMMENDS APPROVAL of a 60-day extension to the Adams Norman Solar Land Development plan, by Jed Fetter, seconded by Jim McDannell.**
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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- **MOTION:** The Planning Commission *TABLES the Adams Norman Solar Land Development plan until the Commission receives a revised plan and Adams County Comments*, by Jed Fetter, seconded by Jim McDannell.
 - **MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- **King Sawmill Ordinance Amendment Proposal**

The Commission heard discussion regarding a proposed zoning text amendment requested by the King family to permit a sawmill operation in the Agricultural District. The applicant's representative explained that the current ordinance permits limited processing of timber harvested from the property itself but does not clearly allow timber brought in from off-site, which the applicants want to process. The proposed amendment would define "sawmill operation," allow sawmills by right in Agricultural and Industrial districts, and establish operational standards including minimum lot size, lot coverage limits, setbacks, screening requirements, stacking lanes, and building height restrictions.

- Commission members expressed concern about whether importing off-site timber would transform the use from agricultural processing into a commercial or industrial use, particularly under Pennsylvania Right-to-Farm interpretations. Several members noted prior legal guidance indicating that only timber grown on the same property qualifies as agricultural processing, while off-site timber would constitute industrial activity. Additional concerns were raised regarding road impacts, truck traffic, and whether the applicants had fully understood zoning limitations before purchasing and subdividing the property.
- Rather than take immediate action, the Commission agreed to continue reviewing the proposed text amendment during its April zoning workshop and requested additional legal clarification, particularly from township counsel, regarding the distinction between agricultural processing and commercial sawmill operations.

GUESTS

ADJOURN

- Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm by Denny Robinson, Chairman.