

PENN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

JUNE 4, 2026

Chairman Zach Smith called to order a meeting of the Penn Township Planning Commission at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2026. Also present were planning members Ron Arnold, Ronnie Bull, Anthony Fisher, Jennifer Mosier, and Lenny Rice along with Township Engineer Bortner, Zoning Officer LeFevre, and Township Manager Sweeney. Planner Heidi Lombardi-Finn was absent with notice.

All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, which was followed by a period of silent meditation.

The planners approved the May 7, 2026, Planning Commission minutes.

Review and make recommendations to the Zoning Hearing Board on the following zoning appeals:

ZHB26-06 – Burkentine Shop LLC, 1454 Baltimore Street, Hanover, PA 17331. The applicant is requesting a Special Exception to Section 212 (Principal Land Use Table) and Section 684 (Shooting Range, Indoor) in order to operate an indoor shooting range. The property is located at 670 Gitts Run Road, Suite 2, in the Industrial Zone.

Ms. Stacy McNeil, Attorney with Barley Snyder, appeared on behalf of the applicant regarding a proposed private indoor archery range at 670 Gitts Run Road, located within unit 2 of an existing 36,000-square-foot industrial building divided into four units. The proposed use would occupy approximately 9,000 square feet and be limited to archery only, with no firearms permitted. Ms. McNeil stated the facility would be for private use by the owners and guests only, not a commercial operation. She advised that nine parking spaces are allocated to the unit, exceeding the Township requirement of one space for the proposed use. She also stated that the applicant would maintain a written safety plan outlining operational rules, including supervision requirements for minors and inexperienced users.

Architect Gary Shaffer, of Shaffer Design Associates, P.C., explained that the design was based on guidance from recognized archery organizations, including the National Field Archery Association and the Eastern Archery Facility Planning Guide. The proposal includes a single five-foot shooting lane within the 72-foot-wide unit and is intended for short-range recreational archery at approximately 20 yards (60 feet). Mr. Shaffer described proposed safety features, including a reinforced backstop area, additional wall protection, and a hanging safety curtain/netting system behind the target area intended to stop or slow arrows. Rear overhead doors would remain secured and closed during operation and function only as emergency exits.

Commission members raised concerns regarding the adequacy of sidewall protections, the potential for arrows to travel beyond the designated shooting area, use of crossbows, occupancy limits, and enforcement of operational restrictions. Additional discussion addressed

the absence of a specifically identified range safety officer, with members expressing that a trained and certified individual should oversee operation of the facility.

The Commission discussed several conditions that would likely be necessary for consideration of a favorable recommendation, including: limiting the facility to one shooting lane only; submission of a written safety plan to the Township; designation of a trained and certified range safety officer; extending the protective curtain system across the full width of the unit; establishing a maximum occupancy limit; and considering restrictions on crossbows or certain types of bows.

Planner Bull moved for an unfavorable recommendation to the Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board regarding Case ZHB 26-06, Burkentine Shop LLC, requesting a special exception pursuant to Section 212 (Principal Land Use Table) and Section 684 (Indoor Shooting Range) to operate an indoor shooting range, based upon the determination that the application did not satisfy the special exception criteria set forth in Section 503.3(a) through (e) of the Zoning Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Planner Fisher and carried unanimously, 6-0.

ZHB26-07 – Shaub, Alexander, 203 Stonewicke Drive, Hanover, PA 17331. The applicant is requesting a Variance to Section 203.3 (Area and Bulk Regulations) and Section 300.9 (Swimming Pools) in order to construct an above-ground swimming pool that encroaches into the rear setback. The property is located at 203 Stonewicke Drive in the R-15 Zone.

Mr. Alexander Shaw, 203 Stonewicke Drive, Hanover, appeared before the Planning Commission regarding a request to install a 24-foot round above-ground swimming pool, approximately 52 inches high, in the rear yard of his property. Mr. Shaw requested a rear setback variance to allow the pool to be placed approximately 10 feet from the rear property line, instead of the required 20-foot setback. Mr. Shaw explained that the request was due to the steep slope in the backyard. He stated that placing the pool within the required setback would require digging significantly into the hill, creating an estimated four- to five-foot drop, making the above-ground pool function more like a below-ground pool. By locating the pool closer to the property line, the amount of excavation would be reduced to approximately 24 to 28 inches.

Commission members discussed the slope of the property and whether a retaining wall would be needed. Mr. Shaw explained that if the pool were installed within the required setback, an engineered retaining wall and additional fencing may be needed for safety due to the change in elevation.

The applicant confirmed the property already has an existing six-foot fence, and the Zoning Officer advised that the fence meets the pool enclosure requirement and that no additional fence around the pool would be necessary.

Commission members also asked about possible easements and neighboring properties. Mr. Shaw stated that, to his knowledge, there are no utility easements in the rear yard and noted that neighboring properties have similar slope conditions.

Planner Mosier moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Zoning Hearing board regarding Case ZHB26-07, Shaub, Alexander requesting a variance pursuant to

Section 203.3 (Area and Bulk Regulations) and Section 300.9 (Swimming Pools) in order to construct an above-ground swimming pool, based upon the determination that the application satisfied the variance criteria set forth in Section 502.3 a) thru f). The motion was seconded by Planner Bull and carried unanimously, 6-0.

ZHB26-08 – Baust, Danny, 636 Basswood Lane, Hanover, PA 17331. The applicant is requesting a Variance to Section 202.3 (Area and Bulk Regulations) in order to construct a single-family dwelling that encroaches into the setbacks. The property is located at 124 Charles Avenue in R-10 Zone.

Zoning Officer LeFevre advised that the applicant and contractor were unable to attend the meeting due to a communication issue regarding notification of the Planning Commission date; however, the applicant plans to appear before the Zoning Hearing Board. She explained that the proposal had changed from a previously discussed garage structure to a single-family dwelling with a garage on the lower level and living space above. It was noted that the applicant had discussed building code requirements with the Building Inspector and indicated confidence that applicable code requirements for the dwelling could be met.

Commission members discussed the setback request and prior application history. It was noted that the property previously contained a trailer and is considered a nonconforming lot created prior to current zoning regulations. Zoning Officer LeFevre explained that setback requirements are determined based on the average neighborhood setbacks, which were calculated at approximately 15.5 feet for the front yard, 9.5 feet for the side yard, and 19 feet for the rear yard. It was further noted that a newer zoning regulation requires structures to remain at least 20 feet from the street right-of-way. They also expressed concern that the plans did not clearly explain the proposed encroachments or provide enough information regarding the requested setbacks. Due to the applicant's absence and lack of clarification on the proposal, members stated they would like additional explanation before supporting the request.

Planner Fisher moved for an unfavorable recommendation to the Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board regarding Case ZHB26-08, Baust, Danny, requesting a variance to Section 202.3 (Area and Bulk Regulations) in order to construct a single-family dwelling that encroaches into the setbacks, based upon insufficient information to determine whether the variance criteria set forth in Section 502.3 a) thru f) has been satisfied. The motion was seconded by Planner Bull and carried unanimously, 6-0.

Review and make recommendations on modification/waiver and exoneration requests, and pending subdivision/land development plans:

SL25-07 – 299 WIRT AVENUE – BLANCA BARAJAS, Hanover Land Services, Inc., 555 Centennial Avenue, Hanover, PA 17331. A Final Subdivision/Land Development plan was submitted in order to combine two existing lots and to construct a building addition and pervious pavers. The property is located at 299 Wirt Avenue in the R-8 Zone.

Hanover Land Services, Inc., on behalf of Martin Garcia Zepeda and Blanca Barajas, is

requesting a waiver to Section 303 (Submission of Plans), and Section 605 (Landscaping and Bufferyards) of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in regards to SL25-07 – 299 Wirt Avenue – Blanca Barajas.

Mr. Kris Raubenstine, Hanover Land Services, Inc., represented this request/plan. The applicant requested a waiver from Section 303 to allow submission of a combined preliminary/final land development plan rather than separate submissions. It was explained that the request would eliminate redundancy in the review process and is a common waiver request.

He then focused on the waiver request from Section 605 relating to landscaping and bufferyards. The applicant requested relief from the required landscape bufferyard along the property line due to limited space between the proposed parking area and adjacent property. It was explained that while the plan maintains the required five-foot setback between the paving and property line, there is insufficient room to accommodate the required landscaping without significantly reducing usable parking area. In place of landscaping, the applicant proposed installation of a fence for screening purposes, noting that a fence would prevent vegetation from encroaching onto neighboring property and adjacent parked vehicles while still providing a visual buffer. The Commission members discussed the proposed fence height and whether a four-foot fence provided adequate screening, particularly regarding visibility and vehicle headlights. It was noted that the zoning ordinance permits a maximum six-foot fence in residential areas behind the front yard setback, although the proposed plan included a four-foot fence based on ordinance requirements.

The Planning Commission then reviewed the final subdivision and land development plan for 299 Wirt Avenue. The proposal involved demolition of multiple existing structures and construction of a new building for an auto sales and repair business, resulting in a cleaner site layout and improved access management. Questions were raised regarding impervious coverage and stormwater management. It was explained that portions of the site would incorporate pervious paving materials and that stormwater requirements had been addressed. Mr. Raubenstine stated during plan review, an unowned strip of land between adjacent properties was identified. Through a quiet title process, ownership of the strip was established and incorporated into the applicant's property, requiring a reverse subdivision as part of the plan. Commission members discussed the consolidation of the property and were advised that discovery of unclaimed parcels is not uncommon during land development review of older properties.

Planner Bull moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners for waivers from Section 303 (Submission of Plans) and Section 605 (Landscaping and Bufferyards) of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regarding SL25-07, 299 Wirt Avenue – Blanca Barajas. The motion was seconded by Planner Mosier and carried unanimously, 6-0.

Planner Mosier moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners on SL25-07 – Blanca Barajas. The motion was seconded by Planner Fisher and carried unanimously, 6-0.

SL25-09 – 127 HICKORY LANE – WELLSRING WESLEYAN CHURCH, Hanover Land Services, Inc., 555 Centennial Avenue, Hanover, PA 17331. A Preliminary-Final Subdivision plan was submitted in order to create two residential lots from an existing lot for two single-family dwellings. The property is located at 127 Hickory Lane in the R-15 Zone.

Hanover Land Services, Inc., on behalf of Wellspring Wesleyan Church, is requesting a waiver to Section 402 (Preliminary Plan Requirements) of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in regards to SL25-09 – 127 Hickory Lane – Wellspring Wesleyan Church.

Mr. Kris Raubenstine, Hanover Land Services, Inc., represented the waiver request and preliminary final plan. He stated the applicant is requesting a waiver from Section 402 to allow submission of a combined preliminary/final subdivision plan rather than separate submissions. It was explained that the waiver would streamline the review process by combining both plan stages into one submission.

The Planning Commission then reviewed the preliminary/final subdivision plan for 127 Hickory Lane, submitted on behalf of Wellspring Wesleyan Church to create two residential lots for future single-family dwellings from an existing church property. Mr. Raubenstine explained that the proposed lots are located on the eastern side of the creek, an area of the property not regularly used for church activities. Proposed Lot 2 would consist of approximately 0.9 acres, and Lot 3 would consist of slightly more than three acres. He explained that the lot layout was designed to comply with ordinance requirements for lot width and depth while considering the creek location and overall usability of the property. Public water and public sewer service would be provided to both lots. It was further explained that Lot 2 was designed to meet minimum lot width requirements while maintaining adequate buildable area, while Lot 3 would provide a larger residential lot option. No public comment was received regarding the proposal.

Planner Bull moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners for a waiver from Section 402 (Preliminary Plan Requirements) of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regarding SL25-09 – 127 Hickory Lane – Wellspring Wesleyan Church. The motion was seconded by Planner Fisher and carried unanimously, 6-0.

Planner Fisher moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners on SL25-09 – 127 Hickory Lane – Wellspring Wesleyan Church. The motion was seconded by Planner Mosier and carried unanimously, 6-0.

SL26-02 – 770 FREDERICK ST AND HANOVER PIKE – HOMEWOOD LIVING MINISTRIES, INC.,
FSA, Inc., 11142 Williamsport Pike, Greencastle, PA 17225. A Preliminary Land Development plan was submitted in order to create 398 new residential dwelling units for a retirement community. The properties are located at 770 Frederick Street and Hanover Pike in the R-15 and R-22 Zones.

FSA, Inc., on behalf of Homewood Living Ministries, is requesting a waiver to Section 306.B.3 (Slopes in Basin), Section 306.B.4 (Fencing Requirements), and 306.B.5 (Retaining Walls) of the Stormwater Management Ordinance in regards to SL26-02 – 770 Frederick St and Hanover Pike – Homewood Living Ministries LLC.

Justin Doty, P.E., of Frederick, Seibert & Associates, Inc., and Ms. Ruth Allen, Director of Project Development, Homewood Retirement Centers, represented the waiver requests and preliminary plan.

Mr. Doty addressed the first waiver request, Section 306.B.3, relating to stormwater basin side slopes, requesting permission to utilize 3:1 slopes rather than the ordinance-required 4:1 slopes. Mr. Doty explained that the proposed slope is commonly used in stormwater basin design and would allow for lower-maintenance vegetation. He further noted that the Public Works Committee had reviewed the request and expressed no concerns.

The second waiver request, Section 306.B.4, related to fencing requirements around stormwater basins. The applicant requested relief from the requirement to install black chain-link fencing around multiple stormwater facilities, explaining that the basins are shallow, temporary holding areas that rarely retain water and that fencing would negatively impact the appearance of the development. The applicant requested either no fencing or approval of an alternative fence style consistent with existing fencing at the Homewood campus. Commission members discussed safety concerns, particularly due to the senior living nature of the development, and stated that fencing has generally been required around stormwater facilities.

The third waiver request, Section 306.B.5, related to retaining walls within stormwater management facilities. The applicant requested relief to allow a retaining wall to be incorporated into a stormwater basin area to maximize usable space and accommodate the proposed residential units. The applicant explained that a safety fence would be installed at the top of the retaining wall. Commission members discussed concerns regarding safety and noted that the ordinance prohibits retaining walls within retention or detention basins.

The Planning Commission then reviewed the preliminary subdivision and land development plan for SL26-02 for Homewood Living Ministries. The proposal included development of 398 residential dwelling units as part of a retirement community at 770 Frederick Street and Hanover Pike, located within the R-15 and R-22 Zoning Districts. Mr. Doty explained that the project would be developed in four phases and include multiple housing types, including carriage homes, cottages, villas, and independent living apartments. The subdivision portion of the plan would consolidate existing parcels and separate portions of the property located in Conewago Township for taxing and ownership purposes. Stormwater facilities extending into Conewago Township would remain subject to easements. He advised that Phase 1 would include a new access point from Hanover Pike/Frederick Street and be

designed to function independently with utilities and stormwater management in place, while later phases would proceed through separate final plan approvals. Staff comments have been reviewed and will be addressed as part of the plan process.

Planner Bull moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners for a waiver from Section 306.B.3 (Slopes in Basin), of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regarding SL26-02 – 770 Frederick St and Hanover Pike – Homewood Living Ministries LLC. The motion was seconded by Planner Rice and carried unanimously, 6-0.

Planner Bull moved for an unfavorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners for a waiver from Section 306.B.4 (Fencing Requirements), of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance regarding SL26-02 – 770 Frederick St and Hanover Pike – Homewood Living Ministries LLC. The motion was seconded by Planner Fisher and carried unanimously, 6-0.

Planner Mosier moved for an unfavorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners for a waiver from Section 306.B.5 (Retaining Walls), of the Penn Township Subdivision and Land Development regarding SL26-02 – 770 Frederick St and Hanover Pike – Homewood Living Ministries LLC. The motion was seconded by Planner Fisher and carried unanimously, 6-0.

Planner Fisher moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners on regarding SL26-02 – 770 Frederick St and Hanover Pike – Homewood Living Ministries LLC. The motion was seconded by Planner Bull and carried unanimously, 6-0.

SL26-03 – 26 INDUSTRIAL DR – PERO FARMS HANOVER FACILITY, LLC, GHI Engineers and Surveyors, 213 Carlisle St, Hanover, PA 17331. A Final Land Development plan was submitted in order to construct a manufacturing addition on an existing building. The property is located at 26 Industrial Drive in the Industrial Zone.

Mr. Kevin Barnes, Group Hanover Engineers and Surveyors represented this plan. He explained that the expansion had originally been approved as part of a prior land development plan around 2015; however, the plan expired. Following the sale of the property to Pero Farms in 2022, a preliminary plan was submitted and approved while the company evaluated the timing of the project. The applicant is now prepared to proceed with construction. Mr. Barnes explained that the proposal is substantially the same as previously approved and includes an approximately 30,000-square-foot addition, primarily for cooler space, along with a small manufacturing expansion and additional loading docks to improve separation of shipping and receiving operations. No significant increase in employees is anticipated, and staffing may be lower than previously projected due to automation. It was explained that no new stormwater management facilities are required, as stormwater was addressed under the original approval. Minor storm sewer improvements are proposed to accommodate additional trailer parking, but there will be no increase in impervious coverage beyond what was previously approved.

Commission members discussed the proposed trailer parking, which was included on the approved preliminary plan. Engineer Bortner advised that the final plan was in order and that approval was contingent upon submission of the required bonding amount.

Planner Bull moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners on regarding SL26-03 – 26 Industrial Drive - PERO Farms Hanover Facility, LLC. The motion was seconded by Planner Mosier and carried unanimously, 6-0.

SL26-04 – 137 W GRANGER ST – SOUTH WESTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT, Hanover Land Services, Inc., 555 Centennial Ave, Hanover, PA 17331. A Final Land Development plan was submitted in order to construct additions on an existing elementary school. The property is located at 137 W Granger Street in the R-15 Zone.

Mr. Kris Raubenstine, Hanover Land Services, Inc., represented this plan. He explained that although the plan was ready for recommendation, the South Western School Board recently decided to place the project on hold. The applicant advised that the project may be returned at a future date and provided an overview of the proposal for informational purposes. The largest portion of the project includes an addition to building on the Granger Street/Hammond Avenue side of the school, which is expected to provide additional classroom space. Additional improvements include minor building additions for aesthetic purposes, paving improvements to reduce congestion associated with deliveries, dumpster service, and student drop-off, as well as resurfacing work in the rear parking and playground areas. He also explained that the existing sewer line serving the school would be replaced due to recurring maintenance issues. No zoning relief or setback variances are required for the project.

Commission members discussed the overall scope of the project and anticipated interior renovations to the school building

No action was taken by the Planning Commission. Mr. Raubenstine advised that extensions would be submitted while the project remains on hold and that the plan may return in the future, potentially with revisions.

SL26-05 – 9 INDUSTRIAL DR – BELROSE GROUP, K and W Engineers, 2201 North Front Street, Suite 200, Harrisburg, PA 17110. A Preliminary- Final Land Development plan was submitted in order to construct a 5,000 square foot building. The property is located at 9 Industrial Drive in the Industrial Zone.

Ryan Schuster of K&W Engineers represented this plan. He explained that the plan had previously been presented to the Planning Commission and that several revisions had been made in response to prior comments. The building footprint was relocated to the northern portion of the site to provide additional storage and laydown area. Stormwater facilities were revised to include stone infiltration systems and additional stormwater modifications were completed to address Township comments and updated DEP requirements. Additional landscaping revisions were made along the front yard buffer area to improve screening of the site. He explained that the size of the proposed trees was increased to provide more effective

vegetation buffering. Commission members also discussed prior concerns regarding fencing, and it was confirmed that a six-foot fence is now proposed in accordance with zoning requirements, including fencing around the site and an electric gate at the entrance.

Commission members discussed revisions made since the previous meeting and were advised that prior concerns had been addressed. Township Engineer Bortner stated that the plan was generally in order, with remaining items limited to post-construction stormwater requirements, the NPDES permit review, and bonding.

Planner Fisher moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners on regarding SL26-05 – 9 Industrial Drive – Belrose Group. The motion was seconded by Planner Bull and carried unanimously, 6-0.

SL26-07 – RIDGE AVENUE – YORK ROAD INVESTMENTS, LLC, Rettew Associates, Inc. 5031 Richard Lane, Suite 111, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. A Final Land Development Plan was submitted in order to construct a 125,350 square foot warehouse. The property is located at Ridge Avenue in the Industrial Zone.

Mr. Joel Widders, P.E., Rettew represented this plan. He explained that the plan is a revision to a previously approved development plan. A 403,000-square-foot warehouse is currently under construction on the western portion of the property. The revised plan replaces a previously approved trailer drop lot on the eastern side of the property with a second warehouse building. He explained that the proposed warehouse would include single-sided loading docks and that the previously approved bridge location has been shifted to improve traffic flow and access to the loading area. Stormwater facilities remain generally consistent with the previously approved plan but have been modified to reflect the building and bridge revisions. The applicant advised that a minor modification to the existing NPDES permit had been submitted to the Conservation District to address the changes.

Commission members discussed parking and truck maneuverability. He stated that parking was designed to accommodate approximately 160 employees based on projected demand, although no tenant has been identified for the building at this time. He also noted that stormwater basins would be fenced, while fencing for the overall site would depend on future tenant security needs. Township Engineer Bortner advised that the remaining review item involved evaluating the existing bonding associated with the previously approved trailer drop lot to determine whether revisions to the bond amount would be necessary due to the updated improvements.

Planner Mosier moved for a favorable recommendation to the Penn Township Board of Commissioners on regarding SL26-07 – Ridge Avenue – York Road Investments, LLC. The motion was seconded by Planner Bull and carried unanimously, 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS: There was none.

NEW BUSINESS: There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Sweeney
Township Manager