



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Chairman Wayne Hoffman called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM on May 7, 2025. Members Eric Harlacher, Justin Bigham, Mark Miller, and Monica Love, and alternates Anthony Pinto and Stephen Stefanowicz were present. Other Township representatives in attendance included Solicitor John Baranski, Zoning Officer John McLucas, Township Engineers C.S. Davidson, Terry Myers, and the Recording Secretary, Tina Wagner. Two members of the public were also present.

**I. Approval of the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting held on April 2, 2025.**

**Motion** by Bigham, seconded by Harlacher, to approve the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting held on April 2, 2025. All members voted aye; motion carried.

**II. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**III. Plans for Consideration**

No Plans on the Agenda

**IV. Zoning Hearing Cases**

- a. *Informational Only*- ZHB 25-2- 4750 W. Canal Road- Agriculture District
  - i. The hearing for Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Solutions, Inc., seeking a use variance for a Propane Filling Facility has been continued to May 21, 2025. Solicitor Craley, along with members of the Zoning Hearing Board, requested that the applicant provide additional evidence regarding vegetative screening, details of fencing, lighting as well as entrance and turn around points on a site plan, they also requested information on the condition of the concrete footers for the existing propane tank located on the property. The meeting will reconvene on May 21st, 2025, for the hearing.
- b. ZHB 25-3- 2531B Conewago Road- Agriculture District
  - i. Application by Thiessen LLC, 6770 Harmony Grove Road, Dover, requesting a Special Exception approval of §27-401 and § 27-642, for the property located at 2531B Conewago Road, Dover, to permit an Intensive Agriculture Operation.

Present on behalf of the applicant and Thiessen LLC were John Williamson, representing Team Ag, located in Ephrata, and Martin Thiessen, owner of Thiessen LLC.

The applicant proposes renovating the existing barn, which has been in use for the past 40 years, to expand the current operation from 18,000 to 38,000 layers. This would classify the operation as an Intensive Agriculture Operation in Dover Township. The



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minimum lot required for an intensive poultry facility is 20 acres, while the farm encompasses 125 acres. He plans to remodel the bird farm to make it more birdfriendly. Additionally, he intends to construct a 40'x70' roofed structure for manure storage. They will implement a manure management program that meets all the DEP Chapter 91 standards. A volunteer odor management plan will also be prepared in accordance with the regulations of Act 38 of the PA Nutrient Management Act. There will be no significant changes to the current water supply, sewage disposal, stormwater runoff, or traffic flow. All setbacks have been met, except for a non-conforming structure of an existing building, which will remain unchanged. They will be required to retain a Zoning permit after all the requirements have been met.

Their integrators, Pete and Gerry's Certified Humane® Free Range, require them to have two square feet of outdoor space per bird in a free-range facility.

Birds that pass away are composted on-site. Fewer than 2% of birds have passed in the past 69 weeks. They currently have no employees but plan to add one or two within the following year. The operation utilizes an egg packer machine. Every two to three weeks, eggs are picked up and transported to Mt. Joy for washing. Next year, they anticipate that pickup will change to every seven days. New birds are received every 15 to 16 months; no breeding is conducted on-site.

**Motion** by Bigham, seconded by Love, for the Zoning Hearing Board to look favorably upon the application by Thiessen LLC for a special exception for an intensive agricultural operation located at 2531B Conewago Road, in the Agriculture District. All members voted aye; the motion carried.

## V. Ordinance(s) for Consideration

The Zoning Officer inquired with the members of the Planning Commission on ordinances that may need to be reviewed and/or updated.

*Short-term Rentals* - Planning Commission members agreed that regulations are necessary. These regulations include hotel/motel taxes, county taxes, fire escapes, maintaining an emergency contact list, inspections, addressing neighbor concerns, and compliance with the health and safety ordinance. They also agreed that these rentals should be permitted within an accessory structure, and that converting an accessory structure should be allowed as well.

*Accessory Dwelling Units* - It was concluded that the Zoning Officer will work on refining language to present to the Planning Commission members at a future meeting, addressing the setbacks, primary size, and entrance location. It was noted that the six-month removal time frame should be removed from the language.

*Tiny Homes* - Currently, they are not regulated by the UCC in Pennsylvania and therefore will not be permitted.



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*Chickens* - The consensus was that they should not be allowed in residential zones.

*Home Occupations* – It was suggested that the habitable floor area be adjusted to 35% of the primary dwelling unit and 50% for an accessory structure, based on the dwelling's gross square footage, and that the restriction of not exceeding 350 square feet be removed.

**VI. Correspondence/Other**

- a. PMEI Training: 'How to Build a Better Planning Commission' will be held on May 15th at 6:30 PM for Planning Commission members.
- b. West Manchester Township has prepared a new Comprehensive Plan; the draft plan is available on their website.
- c. 4561 Dairy Road- Ag Preservation Notice was presented to the Planning Commission members. A total of 58 Acres were preserved on this property—total Acres Preserved in Dover Township to date: 2754 Acres.

**VII. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**VIII. Next Meeting**

The next Planning Commission meeting will take place at the Dover Township Community Building, located at 3700 Davidsburg Road, on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. All Planning Commission meetings for 2025 will be held at the Dover Township Community Building at 3700 Davidsburg Road.

**IX. Adjournment**

**Motion** by Love, seconded by Bigham, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 PM. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Tina Wagner  
*Recording Secretary*