

**HARRIS TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026**

Members in Attendance: Kent Baker, Chair
Peggy Johnson, Vice Chair
Bob Igo
Jeff Duerr
Robert Hoffman
Phill Becker
Renee Diehl, Alternate
Kelly Wolgast, Alternate
Alexander Schmidbauer, Alternate – via Zoom

Staff in Attendance: Mark Boeckel, Township Manager
Debbie Lang, Administrative Secretary – via Zoom

Public in Attendance: Tony Fruchtl, PennTerra Engineering and Resident
Roy Love, DC
Pam Adams, Centre Region COG
Matthew Shaffer
Mark Snyder

Public in Attendance via Zoom: Jeff Fredericks
John Sepp, PennTerra Engineering
Denise Cannon

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Baker called the June 15, 2026 meeting of the Harris Township Planning Commission to order at 7:02 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Igo moved to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2026 meeting. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no one present to discuss items not on the agenda.

4. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS:

a. KEYSER PROPERTY SITE PLAN:

Mr. Boeckel summarized this plan for the Commission noting a site plan is required prior to the submission of a zoning permit application for construction since wetlands exist on the property. The owners propose to build a house with a garage as well as an attached guest house/garage. The site plan also shows a future swimming pool.

The Commission questioned if they would be approving construction of the pool with any action at this time. Mr. Boeckel said the fact that it is being shown on this plan, in the future, they could come back and pull a zoning permit for the pool. He said it is a requirement of our ordinance that they go through this process to demonstrate compliance. There was also concern if the fire chief reviewed this plan. Mr. Boeckel said he would have reviewed the fire protection requirements during the subdivision phase of this plan.

Mr. Igo moved to recommend approval of the Keyser Property Site Plan to the Board of Supervisors contingent upon satisfactory completion of comments from the June 2, 2026, letter of the Township Engineer and the June 10, 2026, letter of the Zoning Officer. Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**b. REQUEST TO REQUIRE PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED
SUBDIVISION OR LAND DEVELOPMENT:**

Mr. Boeckel provided the Commission members the background of this request. It was noted that signs every 1,000 feet seemed excessive. Mr. Boeckel said there are probably very few properties that would be that large and usually only one sign would be required on a property. The Commission was advised the signs would be installed on a property proposed for development probably within a few days after the plan is received and would remain until final action is taken by the Board. There will be no other changes to the way the Township currently notifies residents of developments. This would just be an additional notification.

Roy Love of 404 West Main Street said he did not know about this plan until it went before the Board and was already approved. He said he understood that Mrs. Liggett wanted to donate that property to the Boal Mansion but that did not happen and she also approached the Township, but they were not interested since there wasn't direct access. He said Mrs. Liggett never intended for this to be a development. He asked what the Planning Commission could do to stop these types of developments. He said he was advised that as long as all requirements of the zoning ordinance were met, there was nothing that could be done to stop the development. He mentioned his concerns with all the backfill being brought in to this site and the traffic this development will create. He said there has to be a way to start looking at these developments and find ways to stop these pockets in the future. He said something has to happen or you're going to destroy Boalsburg. He said the sign is important, but the other thing is how we are going to look at these places in the future that are right in the downtown that are going to change forever what Boalsburg is like.

The Commission advised Dr. Love that there have been many committees that have looked at these types of issues and it has not gone completely unrecognized. The Small Area Plan does have a vision for how the Biddle farm and the Boal Mansion properties could be developed together but it has never been implemented with zoning.

Mark Snyder of 129 Harris Avenue said he is in favor of these signs also. He said his only thought was to make some consideration for when those signs disappear because they might intentionally or accidentally disappear. He said he felt it was a good plan to rent the signs to the developers but the Township may have to replace signs.

Tony Fruchtl said as a matter of full disclosure, he works for PennTerra Engineering but he is also a Township resident. He said he agrees with Dr. Love that the signs are a good idea. He said he would suggest the requirement for a sign for the developer to be responsible to communicate with the general public is not a good idea. He said he thought this might cause more problems than it is worth. He suggested the Township put the plans on the website.

Matt Shaffer of 520 West Main Street said in this day and age of technology, it would be nice to just put a bar code on the sign. He also mentioned the trucks are doing quite a bit of damage to the street and are not doing 25 miles per hour on the street.

Mr. Boeckel explained Staff's reasoning for the developer's sign. He said we are not going to be making customized signs for each development. This sign would notify residents of some details of what is being proposed. This second sign would be required for a plan where there was going to be significant development and that is more than just a minor plan, such as those where a small land swap or minor lot line change was being requested.

Dr. Love said the signs should at least have a QR code on it that could provide as much or as little information as the Township decides. He said he does agree that the residents should not be directed to the developer to have them answer questions. He thinks it is a huge burden that anyone who sees this sign has to call to see what is going on.

Staff will work on a draft ordinance and the Planning Commission should see that draft in July or August and then they could make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

c. CENTRE REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – HARRIS TOWNSHIP
FUTURE LAND USE MAP (FLUM) REVIEW:

Pam Adams of the Centre Regional Planning Agency was present to review the outcomes of the May 11, 2026, Harris Township Board of Supervisors meeting and present the staff memorandum summarizing both the April 22, 2026, Joint Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Meeting and the Board's subsequent policy direction from the May 11, 2026 meeting.

She reviewed the fact sheet showing people and housing needs, vacant land capacity within the RGB and growth considerations.

She said at its May 11, 2026 meeting, the Board of Supervisors confirmed the following policy direction, which the Planning Commission is asked to consider as it formulates its recommendations on the draft FLUM:

- No future growth areas will be designated in the Comprehensive Plan at this time. Updated capacity analysis—incorporating approved but unbuilt dwelling units within the Regional Growth Boundary (RGB)—confirms that Harris Township has sufficient residential capacity to accommodate projected growth through 2045, with approximately 361 potential dwelling units against a projected need of 175 units.
- The Board did not identify a specific need for targeted light industrial/flex uses at this time and prefers to retain flexibility for the remaining vacant non-residential land within the RGB.
- The Board acknowledged the value of establishing criteria for evaluating future RGB/Sewer Service Area (SSA) expansions should conditions change. CRPA has proposed a regional criteria framework for this purpose, as outlined in the attached memorandum.

She reviewed the Open House prioritization results and the group discussed development within and outside the RGB. The group discussed expansion of the RGB in Shingletown. The Planning Commission asked to see a map showing the 216 dwelling units approved inside the RGB. Ms. Adams said she will get that map to the Commission. She said she will also send the FLUM recap map back to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Shaffer asked what constitutes light industrial and Ms. Adams gave him the definition. The Planning Commission is asked to review and provide feedback on the staff memorandum that was included in the packet including: (1) the long-term sewage planning considerations identified for the Village of Shingletown and other developed areas within the Township; and (2) the regional framework of criteria recommended for evaluating future growth area designations.

She said the Planning Commission's feedback will inform the draft FLUM and associated policy language, which will be brought to the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) and returned to the Board of Supervisors prior to public adoption proceedings. She said they hope to have this back to the Board of Supervisors by the end of summer.

d. SHADE TREE ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:

Mr. Boeckel briefly summarized the proposed amendments. He said the proposed amendments would result in the following changes:

- The planting of shade trees would be required within the rights-of-way of new streets that meet specific criteria.
- Planting requirements would refer to the Townships adopted Rules and Regulations for Arbor Work.
- The approved tree species list will be removed from the ordinance, and a new list will be adopted by the Board of Supervisors by resolution. The new tree list was developed by regional shade tree committee, comprised of municipal arborists and representatives. The ordinance will reference this adopted resolution.
- The developer would be responsible for tree replacement within eighteen months of street dedication.

Mr. Hoffman moved to recommend that the Board of Supervisor adopt the amendments to Chapter 11, Article IV, Section 4-9, Shade Trees as proposed. Mr. Duerr seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. AGENDA FOR JULY:

Mr. Boeckel said the FLUM map will be on the agenda along with the draft ordinance for data centers and potentially the sign requirements discussed earlier this evening. In response to a question from Chair Baker, Mr. Boeckel said he is hoping to have something put together in the next couple of months for the Village amendments open houses.

5. REPORTS:

Zoning permits: There were no zoning permits circulated.

CRPC: Mr. Duerr said this group did not meet.

CCMPO Technical Committee: Ms. Johnson reported that the CCMPO Technical Committee met and the Federal Highway Administration is reviewing the final EIS and they have been working with Harris and Potter townships to finalize the final design. Work is expected to begin on this project in late summer or early fall. She said another item of interest that doesn't really affect us is on the Benner Pike in the area of I-99 & 550 is under study right now with regard to some widening and safety concerns. She also noted the update of the Federal Functional Classification and National Highway system is taking place right now.

6. RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

The Manager update the Planning Commission on recent actions by the Board of Supervisors.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Mr. Duerr moved to adjourn and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Boeckel, AICP
Township Manager