

WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

May 22, 2025 | 7:00 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Tony Sherr.

Roll Call

All Planning Commission members were present: Tony Sherr (Chair), Michelle Greenawalt, Bob Andorn, Jennifer Taylor, and Lee Koch. Also present were Dan DeMeno (Township Manager) and John Evarts (Township Engineer).

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Michelle Greenawalt, seconded by Bob Andorn, to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2025 meeting with the correction noted by Mr. Andorn that the Mohill subdivision should state the applicant seeks to create “two lots” rather than “two additional lots.”

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Review of Preliminary Land Development Plan: Westrum Development (Trooper Ridge)

Applicant: Westrum Development Company

Location: Trooper Road and Germantown Pike

Plan Type: Preliminary Land Development Plan for proposed for-sale townhome community

Rob Gundlach, attorney for the applicant, presented the revised preliminary land development plan. Key points discussed:

- The site will retain one existing home; the remaining area will be developed into high-end townhomes.
- Germantown Pike access will be emergency-only; full vehicular access is from Trooper Road (a PennDOT road).
- Applicant has coordinated with PennDOT and Montgomery County regarding roadway improvements and right-of-way dedications.
- A traffic impact fee of \$81,250 was acknowledged. Applicant may pursue credits based on intersection upgrades benefiting the public.
- A homeowners' association (HOA) will be responsible for common areas and private roads.
- Applicant proposes a fee in lieu of on-site amenities due to maintenance and liability concerns.

Commission Comments:

- Mr. Andorn raised concerns about limited guest parking, referencing challenges at the Wheat Sheaf development.
- Mr. Andorn also expressed preference for on-site amenities and walkable design elements.
- Mr. Gundlach responded that:
 - Sidewalks are provided throughout the development.
 - HOA documents will prohibit additions, garage conversions, and other unapproved changes.
 - All homes will include basements; some may be walkouts depending on topography.
 - Applicant is in discussion with a nearby church about allowing overflow parking for special events.
 - Additional discussions with staff will explore the feasibility of trails or other passive amenities.
- Full architectural elevations will be submitted before final plan approval.
- Applicant agreed to comply with all Township and external agency review letters.

Motion

Motion by Michelle Greenawalt, seconded by Jennifer Taylor, to recommend approval of the preliminary land development plan subject to:

- Compliance with all review letters from CKS Engineers, the Fire Marshal, and the Montgomery County Planning Commission (May 21, 2025).
- Submission of detailed architectural renderings, a guest parking analysis, and a revised amenities proposal before final plan application.

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Discussion: Proposed Ordinance Review Procedure

Township Manager DeMeno presented a proposed process for reviewing ordinance drafts.

- Mr. Andorn expressed concern that the proposal was overly rigid and did not accommodate iterative feedback.

- Consensus supported a more flexible process, allowing extra review time and feedback when appropriate.
- Mr. DeMeno agreed to revise the draft policy for future review.

Accessory Structure Ordinance Amendment

Mr. DeMeno presented a revised draft ordinance addressing accessory structure standards.

- Changes included a de minimis exemption for structures under 1-foot diameter (e.g., flagpoles), and tiered setbacks based on size.
- The Commission discussed:
 - Preventing abuse of multiple exempt structures
 - Stable allowances on preserved farmland
 - Height limits and neighbor impact mitigation

Motion

Motion by Bob Andorn, seconded by Tony Sherr, to recommend adoption of the ordinance amending Chapter 150 regarding accessory structures and related definitions.

Motion passed, 3-2, Greenawalt and Koch against

Childcare Zoning Ordinance Amendment

- Revised definitions were reviewed for childcare centers, family childcare homes, and schools.
- Issues discussed:
 - Ensuring consistent cross-referencing
 - Clarifying parking requirements in multi-tenant commercial centers
 - State certification (DHS vs. PDE) for dual-use facilities
- Public comment from Christine Steere noted schools like Chesterbrook Academy are dually licensed and should be accounted for in the ordinance.

Motion

Motion by Bob Andorn, seconded by Michelle Greenawalt, to recommend adoption of the ordinance amending permitted uses and standards for childcare centers, subject to:

- Clarification of cross-references and definitions

- Explicit provision that dual-use entities must comply with the more restrictive applicable standard (e.g., parking, lot size)

Motion passed unanimously, 4-0-1, Andorn abstained

Open Space Review Inquiry

A resident, Christine Steere asked for an update on the Planning Commission's open space review.

- Mr. DeMeno noted that updated descriptions for Township-owned properties are now posted on the website, including location, acreage, access, and recreational value.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan DeMeno

Township Manager