

MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
BOROUGH OF PARKESBURG, PA
AUGUST 28, 2025

PC MEMBERS PRESENT –

Todd Brade
Matthew Marran
Casey Wyatt
Dave Bashore

BOROUGH OFFICIALS –

John S. Carnes, Jr., Esq., Borough Solicitor
Ed Van Arsdale, III, P.E., ARRO Consulting, Borough Engineer
Mike Murphy, MJMMR Land I, LLC, Developer
Josh Delaney, Precision Geospatial Solutions, Developer's Engineer

OTHERS –

(Eight members of the public were present.)

Call to Order. Mr. Bashore called the meeting to order in the main meeting room at Borough Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Quorum. A quorum of members was present.

Announcements. Mr. Bashore announced Borough Council's appointment of Josh Eastep as a regular member of the PC and Shelby Smith as our alternate member and thanked them both for their interest in continuing to serve the community.

Approval of Minutes. Mr. Marran moved to approve the minutes of the Commission's July 31, 2025, meeting. Seconded by Ms. Wyatt, the motion passed 4-0.

Preliminary/Final Subdivision/Land Development Plan Application of MJMJR Land I, LLC, re: Lot line adjustment for two single-family housing units in one semi-detached/twin structure to be built on 0.68 acres at 217-219 Chapel Avenue.

* Messrs. Murphy and Delaney described various aspects of the plan such as building footprint, removal and replanting of trees and landscaping, etc.; the Zoning Hearing Board's approval of certain variances and special exceptions earlier in the year; and their request to change the lot line of the two properties to make them approximately even in width.

* The applicant is also requesting that the application be considered a Minor Subdivision plan instead of a Major plan. Mr. Van Arsdale reiterated his engineer's review letter comment that he was recommending that this request be denied, because the proposed land disturbance in the plan at about 12,000 sq.ft. is significantly greater than the 3,000 sq.ft. threshold in the Borough's SALDO. Mr. Carnes concurred, saying denial was appropriate to ensure the integrity of the Borough's zoning ordinance.

* Mr. Delaney requested that in lieu of treating the plan as a Minor Subdivision the Borough treat the plan as a combined Preliminary/Final Plan. Neither the Borough Engineer nor Solicitor took issue with this request.

* The applicant requested that he be permitted to submit a letter of credit after the approved plan was recorded. Mr. Carnes replied that he would advise Borough Council to deny this request and require the submittal of any performance bonds or letter of credit in accordance with the Borough code.

* Beth Ann Sweigart, a resident of North Street, asked the applicant why the plan showed a Chapel Avenue address when the proposed twin homes would front on North Street. Mr. Murphy replied that he has addressed that issue with the U.S. Postal Service, which said it would change the address to Front Street if/when the plan was approved and the housing units were built.

* Ms. Sweigart then asked if construction would adversely affect her septic tank to which Mr. Delaney assured her it would not, primarily because the contour of her property is higher than the subject property; thus, stormwater would flow away from her property (the twins would be connected to public water and sewer).

* Mr. Marran moved to recommend that Borough Council approve the plan with the following 6 conditions:

1. That the applicant's waiver request to treat this plan as both a Preliminary Plan and a Final Plan be approved, provided they submit a letter requesting said waiver prior to Borough Council's final vote on the plan;
2. That the applicant's waiver request to treat their plan as a Minor Subdivision be denied pursuant to the Borough Engineer's Comment #32 in his second review letter dated August 22, 2025;
3. That the applicant satisfies all the comments in the Borough Engineer's review letters dated July 29, 2025, and August 22, 2025, prior to the approved plan's recording with the Chester County Recorder of Deeds;
4. That the applicant work with the Borough Engineer to implement, to the Engineer's satisfaction, all the applicable recommendations in the review letter of the Chester County Planning Commission dated August 19, 2025, prior to the Borough's issuance of any related building permits;
5. That the applicant present to Borough Council conceptual facades and elevations of the proposed twin houses prior to Council's final vote on the plan; and
6. That the applicant's requested waiver to remove three trees over 25" in diameter at breast height be approved, provided they submit a letter requesting said waiver prior to Borough Council's final vote on the plan.

Seconded by Mr. Brade, the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and Adoption of Proposed Policy re: Planning Commission Operating Procedures.

Mr. Bashore advised that based on his research of some other successful, highly functional Planning Commissions around the country he is proposing basic operating procedures for our PC. A draft of the procedures was distributed a few weeks ago for members' review and consideration.

He summarized the various sections of the procedures: an overview of PCs in Pennsylvania, responsibilities of the PC under the PA MPC and Borough ordinance, ethical obligations of PC members, criteria for PC review of subdivision/land development plans, meeting agendas and procedures, and adoption of and amendments to the policy.

* Ms. Wyatt suggested that a provision be added to the Ethical Obligations section whereby members were expected to attend all PC meetings, with exceptions only for illness, death in the family, etc. and that the chair be authorized to advise Borough Council if a member's chronic lack of attendance called for their replacement on the PC.

* Mr. Marran asked if the proposed policy called for Borough Council approval of the procedures to which Mr. Bashore replied that Council would not be asked to approve the procedures and any future amendments but that the policy and any future changes would be provided to Council for their information.

* Mr. Brade moved to approve the operating procedures, as amended with the addition of meeting attendance language. Seconded by Ms. Wyatt, the motion passed 4-0. The procedures policy is attached and incorporated hereto.

Old Business.

Mr. Bashore asked if anyone had anything to say about the ongoing SEPTA funding crisis and its effects on the Parkesburg community.

* Mr. Marran gave a shoutout to TV's Fox 29 for interviewing Parkesburg residents about the situation and said the crisis was a real regional issue.

New Business.

1. Mr. Bashore explained that, under the PA Municipalities Planning Code, Planning Commissions help to develop their community's Comprehensive Plans every ten years or so. The MPC also suggests that PCs assist their governing bodies to implement the plan.

He advised that he had compiled the 31 Action Items in the Borough's 2020 Comp Plan that were assigned to the PC and asked for a consensus to have further discussion at the 9/25 PC meeting on his proposal to establish a committee of 2 or 3 PC members to prioritize the Action Items and recommend their implementation to Borough Council. There being no objections, he said he would put this topic on the September meeting agenda for further discussion and possible authorization.

2. Greg Duke and Glen Driver, residents of East 2nd Avenue asked about the status of the prospective development of the former Christmas Tree Farm property by VistaBlock.

* Mr. Brade gave them a brief history and an update and advised that the next step will be for the developer to submit a formal land development plan under the Borough's amended zoning and subdivision/land development ordinances after they complete the required engineering studies called for in the code's Conditional Use provisions; the studies are expected to take until the end of the year at the earliest.

* Ms. Wyatt distributed an information flyer that was recently sent to the E. 2nd Avenue neighbors about the VistaBlock sketch plans and advised them to contact the company's CEO Brandon Conrad with any questions or comments about the plan..

* Mr. Carnes advised that he would take another look at the zoning code's TND provisions regarding Borough Council's prerogative to establish an ad hoc Design Review Committee to address various design aspects of the development, such as building façades and elevations, etc. Mr. Brade suggested waiting until after VistaBlock submits a formal land development plan to bring this to Council's attention.

Adjourn. There being no further business, Mr. Brade moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wyatt and passed 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Dave Bashore, Chair

(NOTE: *These minutes were approved _-_ by the Planning Commission on 9/25/2025.)*