

November 13, 2025

The East Hopewell Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting at the Municipal Building at 7:30 p.m. Members present were Rob Davis, Jerry McLaughlin, Mike Kosmicki, Sam Georgieff, and Scott Garvey. Also attending the meeting were solicitor Samantha Cralley-Byerts, Laura Vasold, Todd Warner, John Gray, Jack Cougle, Ed Cockey, and Terri Mallory.

Laura Vasold, the Township Secretary, announced that the meeting would be recorded and that residents must state their name and address when they speak to the Planning Commission.

Rob Davis opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Sam Georgieff made a motion to approve the agenda. Jerry McLaughlin seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

Mike Kosmicki made a motion to approve the minutes of October 9, 2025, as read. Rob Davis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously carried.

Winery Ordinance Discussion: The Commission reviewed the legally formatted draft of the Winery Ordinance. Key updates and clarifications included:

Zoning Designation: Wineries will be permitted as a **Use by Right** in the General Commercial (GC) zone and as a **Special Exception** in the Agricultural (AG) zone.

Ordinance Placement: The ordinance will be added to Section 403 as an accessory use and to Sections 303 and 305 as a use by right or special exception, as applicable.

Reference to Special Events Ordinance: A placeholder clause referencing the forthcoming Special Events Ordinance was discussed. The Commission agreed to retain this clause as a separate item (renumbered as Section 8) pending finalization of the Special Events Ordinance.

Definitions: Definitions were reviewed for consistency with Section 203, with “winery” to be inserted alphabetically following “wind energy conversion system.”

Submission Strategy: Members agreed that both ordinances should be submitted together to the York County Planning Commission to ensure clarity and avoid referencing provisions not yet enacted.

Special Events Ordinance Discussion: The Commission continued development of the Special Events Ordinance. Key discussion points included:

Scope and Structure: The Commission agreed to focus on finalizing the core ordinance before addressing provisions for temporary event venues. Further discussion on temporary events will be scheduled after the main ordinance is complete.

Definitions: Members reviewed proposed definitions for “Special Event Venue” and “Temporary Outdoor Amusement or Event” as presented in the meeting materials. The Commission discussed the importance of clearly distinguishing between temporary and ongoing uses, and how those differences affect permitting, infrastructure, and zoning pathways. Additional refinements were noted for future review.

Use Types by Zoning District: The Commission confirmed that Special Event Venues will be permitted as a Use by Special Exception in the Agricultural (A-1) and Rural Residential (RR) zones, and as a Use by Right in the General Commercial (GC) zone, where the use was previously unlisted.

Fireworks: Legal considerations surrounding fireworks were briefly discussed. Members acknowledged the difficulty of enforcing restrictions and ultimately found it a moot point to include additional limitations in the ordinance. No further action was taken.

Event Thresholds: The ordinance will distinguish between routine business operations (e.g., wine tastings) and special events. Events involving entertainment, amplified music, or large gatherings will require a permit. Recurring events—such as weddings, concerts, or seasonal programming—will require zoning approval and permitting as a Special Event Venue.

Septic and Capacity Enforcement: The Commission emphasized that enforcement will rely on the Township Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO) and DEP standards. Septic system design and parking capacity will serve as natural limits on event size.

Permitting Frequency: The Commission discussed limiting the number of temporary outdoor events to a set number per year (e.g., six per property). It was clarified that this restriction would apply only to temporary events. Special event venues, once approved as a principal or special exception use, would be permitted to host events on a regular or seasonal basis, subject to zoning and infrastructure compliance.

Public Comments: Terri Mallory asked for clarification on the AG zone designation and the process for transitioning her existing application to a special exception under the new ordinance. The Commission confirmed that her prior zoning hearing board application could be amended accordingly.

John Gray raised concerns about enforcement and consistency. The Commission affirmed its commitment to creating a unified framework and clarified that enforcement would rely on existing DEP and SEO standards.

Ed Cockey and other residents discussed septic system design, event thresholds, and the importance of trust and compliance. The Commission emphasized that all wineries would be subject to the same standards and that enforcement mechanisms were in place for noncompliance.

Next Steps:

Revise and Reformat the Special Events Ordinance: The Commission will update the ordinance based on the changes discussed during the meeting—including clarified definitions, zoning pathways, and enforcement provisions—and reformat it into legal draft form consistent with Township standards.

Prepare Both Ordinances for Public Input: Once finalized, the draft Special Events Ordinance and the previously completed Winery Ordinance will be made available for public review and comment prior to submission to the York County Planning Commission.

Coordinate Submission of Both Ordinances: The Winery Ordinance and Special Events Ordinance will be submitted together to the York County Planning Commission to ensure consistency and avoid referencing provisions not yet enacted.

Adjournment: At 9:30 PM, Sam Georgieff made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which Mike Kosmicki seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura A. Vasold
Secretary