

May 8, 2025 (Draft)

The East Hopewell Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting at the Municipal Building at 7:30 p.m. Members present were Rob Davis, Mike Kosmicki, Scott Garvey, and Jerry McLaughlin. Also attending the meeting was solicitor Mike Craley, Sam Craley, Laura Vasold, Roy Hiller, Dean Miller, Todd Warner, John Gray, Terrilynn Mallory, Scott Powell, Lawrence Vasold, and Dan Fowler.

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.

Mike Kosmicki made a motion to approve the agenda. Scott Garvey seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

Jerry McLaughlin made a motion to approve the minutes of April 10, 2025, as read. Scott Garvey seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

Next, a discussion ensued to address concerns about the commercial zone. East Hopewell Township currently has a commercial zone, but much of it is utilized for agricultural or residential purposes. There is limited demand for commercial development in East Hopewell Township due to its rural character and the absence of major thoroughfares. Challenges include identifying suitable areas for future commercial zones while considering agricultural preservation and development rights. Developers have options to seek variances, propose rezoning, or use curative amendments to contest zoning ordinances; however, these tools are seldom utilized. Rezoning could create non-conformities for existing uses, impact infrastructure, and raise concerns about favoritism or spot zoning. Tax rates for properties typically change only when the use changes.

The commission believes the current zoning structure is adequate and aims to maintain the township's rural character while preparing for potential future development pressures. If demand increases, professional consultants or county planning may be engaged to ensure thoughtful and impartial zoning decisions. There is no immediate need for additional commercial zones unless demand arises.

Next was a review of the AG Security Application for 15815 Cross Roads Avenue, Parcel 25000DK0034000000 (34). Decisions regarding this application must be deferred until the establishment of an AG Security Committee.

However, a review and discussion of this parcel and nearby parcels within the commercial zone were conducted due to concerns about the availability of usable lots for commercial uses. The discussion focused on agricultural security and preservation in East Hopewell Township Commercial Zone, specifically highlighting parcel 34, which is

currently under application for Agricultural Security; parcel 25000DK00370000000 (37), which is in the Agricultural Preserve; and parcel 25000DK0041E000000 (41), which remains available for commercial use. The group concludes that as long as parcel 41 remains available for commercial development, the township is not at risk, and no immediate rezoning is necessary.

Rob Davis made a motion to table the discussion on the zoning for the special event venue and agricultural processing establishment until the next Planning Commission meeting. Mike Kosmicki seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

The Comprehensive Development Plan was discussed. It was determined that no action is needed at this time.

The meeting was opened to public comment. No public comments were made.

At 8:35 p.m., Mike Kosmicki made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jerry McLaughlin seconded the motion, which was unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura A. Vasold  
Secretary