

MINUTES

May 6, 2025

The minutes of the Regional Planning Commission meeting held at the Fairfield County Records Center, 138 West Chestnut Street, Lancaster, Ohio, and via livestream and conference call.

Presiding: Jennifer Morgan, President

Present: Josh Anders, Mike Berry, Vince Carpico, Amie Cohen, Joe Ebel, Gail Ellinger, Amanda Everitt, Jennifer Henery, Charles Hockman, Kent Huston, Douglas Ingram, Jarrod Mahaffey, Gina Matos, Ben Myers, Joe Palmer, Carly Sparrow, Tony Vogel, Ira Weiss, Jeff Williamsen, Tiffany Wilson, Mike Wolfe, and Commissioner Dave Levacy.

RPC Staff: Holly Mattei, Nicholas Eastham and Sharlene Bails.

ITEM 1. MINUTES

The minutes of the April 1, 2025, Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission meeting, were presented for approval. Ira Weiss made a motion for approval of the minutes. Joe Palmer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ITEM 2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jennifer Morgan welcomed everyone to the meeting. She announced that Ira Weiss will be receiving an award at an event on May 22nd as a 16 over 60 honoree. Congratulations!

Nicholas Eastham presented the following report:

ITEM 3. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

APPLICANT: Liberty Township

Liberty Township has submitted several proposed changes to its zoning code. The proposed changes affect Article III, Section 8.6, Section 9.6 (G), and Section 9.6 (H). A summary of these changes is summarized below.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

- a) Article III
 - 1) Adds definition for "industrial."
 - i) "Making or intended to make a profit."
 - 2) Adds definition for "A.D.A."
 - i) "American Disabilities Act."
 - 3) Adds definition for "JEDD."

- i) “Joint Economic Development District. A JEDD is a special-purpose territorial district created by contract between municipal corporations and townships for the purpose of encouraging economic development, creating jobs, and improving the economic welfare of citizens.”
- 4) Adds definition for ‘NCA.’
 - i) “New Community Authority”
- 5) Adds definition for “New Community.”
 - i) “A community or development of property in relation to an existing community planned so that the resulting community includes facilities for the conduct of industrial, commercial resident, cultural, educational, and recreational activities, and designed in accordance with planning concepts for the placement of utility, open space, and other supportive facilities.”
- 6) Adds definition for “CEDA.”
 - i) “Cooperative Economic Development Agreement. The legislative authority of one or more municipal corporations, by ordinance or resolution, and the board of township trustees of one or more townships, by resolution, may enter into a cooperative economic development agreement.”
- 7) Adds definition for “Common Open Space.”
 - i) “Land designated for the benefit of residents and intended for recreation or aesthetic purposes.”
- 8) Adds definition for “downsizing.”
 - i) “Changing the zoning of a property to a lower value use.”
- b) Section 8.6
 - 1) Establishes lot area, setback, and height requirements for each District.
 - 2) “All new construction shall conform to and join a CEDA, JEDD, or NCA as directed by the Township Trustees excepting Rural Residential and Agricultural Districts.”
- c) Section 9.6 (G)
 - 1) Amends development standards
 - i) Increases minimum lot size to 2.00-acres (from 1.00-acre).
 - ii) Decreases maximum building height to 35 feet (from 40 feet).
- d) Section 9.6(H)
 - 1) Adds driveway requirement
 - i) Concrete must stop a minimum of 3 feet from the road edge.

ANALYSIS

Fairfield County Technical agencies either expressed no concern, or did not provide comment.

Upon review, RPC Staff identified several areas of revision for Article III:

If the term “industrial” is referring to the intention of making a profit, how would this term or the General Industrial District (I-1) defer from other commercial uses or districts?

There are several definitions, such as A.D.A., JEDD, NCA and CEDA, that are defined in either federal or state laws. We recommend that these definitions match the associated federal and state laws. RPC further recommends the Township resolution incorporate language stating that the definitions shall automatically update to reflect any changes made to the corresponding definition at the federal or state level.

RPC staff agrees with the intent of the language proposed in Section 8.6, but the language is vague. It should also be tied to a specific action within the zoning code (i.e. approval of a rezoning, development plan, etc.) RPC staff recommends that the township consult with legal counsel to revise this language to ensure it is crafted in the most appropriate manner so that it is legally defensible.

The term “downzoning” may be a more accurate term than “downsizing.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

RPC Staff recommends modification of the proposed amendment to address the above comments in the Analysis section of the report.

A motion was made by Joe Palmer to approve the RPC staff recommendation. Ira Weiss seconded the motion. The motion passed with Jarrod Mahaffey abstaining.

ITEM 5. BUILDING DEPARTMENT APPLICATIONS

RPC staff presented a list of building permit applications under review.

ITEM 6. BILLS

Holly Mattei presented the following bills for payment:

530000	Contractual Services		<u>\$11,650.00</u>
		TOTAL	\$11,650.00

A motion was made by Carly Sparrow to approve the bills for payment. Jarrod Mahaffey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ITEM 7. OTHER BUSINESS

None

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There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Joe Palmer and seconded by Kent Huston. Motion passed.

Minutes Approved By:

Jennifer Morgan, President

Kent Huston, Secretary