

Crockery Township

**Regular Planning Commission Meeting**

**February 18, 2025**

**Approved Minutes**

Chairman Arends called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call:

Present: Commissioners Roy Holmes, Dave Willis, Robert Machiela, Mike Munch, Jake Noel, Ryan Arends and Ryan Kelly.

Absent: Commissioner Roy Holmes.

Planners Julie Lovelace and Aaron Bigelow with Fresh Coast Planning were present on behalf of the Township. Paige Silva was also present as Recording Secretary.

There was 1 person seated in the public gallery.

**Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda**

Approved as submitted.

**Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes**

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Munch to approve the Minutes as written from January 21, 2025. A second was offered by Commissioner Noel.

**Agenda Item 4. Announcements**

Commissioner Kelly provided updates regarding the public water expansion and the easements that go along with it. Tiles excavating is doing the water main.

**Agenda Item 5. Communications**

Planner Lovelace stated that of the people that were sent a letter regarding the possible re-zoning in Nunica, five came to the meeting and two people sent correspondence stating they did not approve of the prospect of re-zoning. Lovelace will present feedback to the Commission in March to give plenty of time for responses.

## **Agenda Item 6. Public Comments**

Chairman Arends offered public comment for any item not on the agenda. No public comments were offered.

## **Agenda Item 7. Action Items**

None.

## **Agenda Item 8. Presentations**

None.

## **Agenda Item 9. Discussion Items**

### A. Barn Event Venues - Holmes

Planner Lovelace gave a recap of the previous discussion the Commission had. As a result of that discussion, she took a sample Township ordinance and modified it. She presented the Commission with a copy of the drafted ordinance and reviewed the high points. The Commission discussed the latest date that temporary structures should be removed for the season and they agreed that December 1st will be sufficient.

Commissioner Machiela asked Planner Lovelace about the income requirement for this Ordinance. Planner Lovelace answered that this is intended to prohibit people from buying property in Crockery for the sole purpose of developing a wedding venue. The Commissioners discussed this at length and the burden it may place on the owners. There was a public comment made. A member of the audience asked why the income requirement was necessary. Planner Lovelace replied that the feedback from the Master Plan public engagement, and input from the Commissioners, helped aid in this decision. The general consensus is that the Township wants to support agriculture and preserve the rural character. This provision is to ensure that the use is accessory to, and in support of, an active farming operation. After discussion, Commissioner Machiela agreed with the modified version of the language. There was a question regarding the alcoholic beverage provision.

Commissioner Arends stated this is ready for public hearing.

### B. Commercial Horticulture Zoning Ordinance Amendment - MacKenzie

Chairman Arends stated this matter was proposed to the Commission from Mr. MacKenzie. Planner Bigelow provided an introduction to this matter and stated that the owner of Hortech wishes to add farm labor housing to the area. Planner Lovelace discussed an issue Chester Township had with their ordinance and farm labor housing. The result of the Ordinance remaining silent on density resulted in a large amount of farm laborers on a single property.

Planner Lovelace asked the Commission what they desire. She stated that a single-family dwelling could house one family of related individuals. The defining attribute of labor housing is multiple unrelated individuals under one roof with shared facilities. Planner Lovelace stated that the Applicant has enough land to do this but the setbacks the Applicant proposes may prove to be an issue.

Commissioner Noel asked if it can be arranged for the housing not to abut an R-1 zoned house. Current farm labor housing has a setback of 100ft. The Applicant wants to allow the setback to be 20ft from the lot line.

Planner Lovelace said that there are state requirements for the labor housing. The only thing the Applicant has to meet with the Township are zoning regulations. The Township can limit the maximum number of laborers on the parcel. Planner Lovelace said that laborers are often working on multiple crops in multiple farms. In some instances, if the workers are not busy on one farm and will go to another farm temporarily.

Commissioner Kelly said their labor should be made exclusive to the farm they are living on. Chairman Arends said they are open to the idea, but they are not open to setback variations. Planner Lovelace said the existing two dwellings on residential property meet the current zoning ordinance for setbacks. The Applicant stated he does not have enough local employees and the purpose of building these would be for H2A workers.

C. Master Plan Chapters 4 and 8, revised

Planner Lovelace stated that Governor Witmer signed a new bill into law which impacts the Master Plan regarding housing. She believes the current Master Plan is sufficient and she stated that she added extra language to cover all of the new aspects. The chapter included a mixed use provision. She pulled the census results and cross referenced it with available housing in the Township. Her results were there are not many vacant residences in the Township.

Attorney Redick conferred with Attorney Nettleton on the utilities chapter to tighten the language regarding sewer. There were not many changes. The Commissioners approved the draft changes. She stated that she will provide an updated framework/timeline for the Commissioners at the next meeting.

D. Attached Garage Size

Planner Bigelow discussed the fact that some people wish to have larger attached garage space and are willing to forgo detached accessory buildings. Additionally, the PC has been asked to consider raising the maximum square footage to from 1,200 SF to 1,600 SF. Commissioner Noel asked if this would result in disproportionate garages. Planner Lovelace stated that the Commission could attempt to keep the garages proportionate through the Zoning Ordinance. The same setbacks and coverage would still be allotted. The Commission asked Planner Bigelow to draft new language based on this discussion

**Agenda Item 10. Adjournment**

**A motion** to adjourn was made by Commissioner Munch at 7:22 p.m. A second was offered by Commissioner Willis.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paige Silva  
Recording Secretary

Next Regular Meeting: March 18, 2025  
Next Special Meeting: TBD