

# LEHIGH TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of June 9, 2025

Present: David Shulman, Chairman  
Todd Rousenberger, Vice Chairman  
Bill Jones, Secretary  
Tim Bartlett  
Cynthia Miller  
Michael Corriere, Solicitor  
Lori Lambert, Planning & Zoning Secretary  
Jim Milot, Township Engineer

Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

READING OF THE MINUTES

Todd Rousenberger made a motion to approve the minutes and waive the reading of the minutes from the May 12, 2025, Planning Commission meeting. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

TIME EXTENSION REQUESTS

***Billy Carter, 3641 Magnolia Drive, Preliminary/Final Minor Subdivision Plan, Expires: June 27, 2025, Extension Request Until: October 31, 2025***

Billy Carter was present to represent this time extension request. The time extension is being requested in order to get through the steep slope requirements of the ordinance.

Cindy Miller made a motion to grant the Billy Carter time extension request until October 31, 2025. Todd Rousenberger seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

***XCF Holding, LLC, 1141 Quince Road, Preliminary Major Subdivision Plan, Expires: July 13, 2025, Extension Request Until: September 30, 2025***

Joe Rentko from Black Forest Engineering was present to represent this time extension request. Comments have been received back from NCCD in regards to the NPDES permit. Revised plans will be submitted to the Township for the July PC meeting in order to address the Township Engineer's comments.

Cindy Miller made a motion to grant the XCF Holding, LLC, time extension request until September 30, 2025. Bill Jones seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

***Melostone Estates, Riverview Drive, Preliminary/Final Minor  
Subdivision Plan, Expires: July 13, 2025, Extension Request Until:  
January 31, 2026***

Brad Rock from Lehigh Engineering and Sal Melo were present for this request. Dave Shulman abstained from this discussion. The standard six-month extension is being requested; however, Brad Rock does not feel they will need the full six months.

Bill Jones made a motion to grant the Melostone Estates, time extension until January 31, 2026. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. Bill Jones, Cindy Miller, Todd Rousenberger and Tim Barlett voted aye. Dave Shulman abstained. Motion carried.

PLAN REVIEW

***Melostone Estates, Riverview Drive, Preliminary/Final Minor  
Subdivision Plan, Expires: July 13, 2025***

Brad Rock from Lehigh Engineering and Sal Melo were present to represent this plan review. Dave Shulman abstained from this discussion.

A review letter has been received from the Sewage Enforcement Officer, Ian Stout of Keystone Consulting Engineers, dated June 2, 2025. The Planning Module was submitted for review last week.

A review letter has been received from the Township Engineer, Mike Muffley of Hanover Engineering, dated June 6, 2025. Jim Milot stated that the stormwater covenant shall be reviewed with Mike Muffley. There are also some minor notation changes that need to be made on the plan. Brad Rock stated that he made all the changes on the plan to address Mike Muffley's review letter comments. Jim Milot stated that the waivers and deferrals with the approval date needs to be added to the plan and the PennDOT HOP's need to be obtained.

Cindy Miller stated that this is five proposed driveways coming out on to a State Road; in a high traffic, high speed area and located in a bend. She considers this to be very dangerous. She doesn't know what the proposal is for the back lot. Mr. Melo tried to put a winery in on Long Lane, is that what is going to happen here? This is not a good area for this many driveways and is a safety issue. Brad Rock added the available site distances and required site distances for each driveway on the plan. Jim Miliot stated that PennDOT will generally look at the speed limit and the required site distance to make sure they are compliant. If the Board so chooses, they can request that PennDOT review this from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed as opposed to the

posted speed. It is PennDOT's jurisdiction whether or not they issue those permits. Cindy Miller stated that she is protecting the Township, she feels that this should be requested. Jim Milot stated that PennDOT can be notified that there is a concern with the speed limits and the access in the area. Michael Corriere stated that a recommendation should be made to the Board of Supervisors, to send a letter of concern to PennDOT. Brad Rock stated that there is very far site distance on each lot, the lots and driveways are in compliance with the Ordinance. Brad Rock requested conditional approval of the plan; there are only two outstanding approvals which are outside agencies.

Bill Jones made a motion to grant this plan conditional preliminary/final approval, conditioned upon the developer complying with the comments in Keystone Consulting Engineers letter dated June 2, 2025, the comments in the Engineers letter dated June 6, 2025, and recommending that the Board of Supervisors send a letter to PennDOT requesting that they look at the safety concerns regarding the speed limit and proposed driveway accesses on to Route 145. Tim Bartlett seconded the motion. Bill Jones, Tim Bartlett, Cindy Miller and Todd Rousenberger voted aye. Dave Shulman abstained from the vote. Motion carried.

#### GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION

##### ***Ad Hoc Committee – Zoning/SALDO Update***

Cindy Miller stated that at our last meeting Mike Muffley commented that he would have something submitted to the consultant by Memorial Day. We haven't received anything, our meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2025. Jim Milot stated that Mike Muffley is working on the Zoning Ordinance; he should be providing something shortly. Cindy Miller stated that we should continue with the meeting; whether we have the draft or not. Mike Muffley and Pennoni will be at the meeting, Bill Jones and Todd Rousenberger cannot attend.

##### ***Open Space Preservation***

Cindy Miller stated that there a few residents who have come to the Board of Supervisors requesting the creation of an Ordinance for Open Space Land Preservation. Through the Ordinance it would require that a committee of five people be created, criteria would need to be set up to see what would qualify. Once the committee is set up, residents can apply for the program and the committee would review and determine if they qualify. There would be legal and engineering fees that would continually go on. The parcels that are accepted would need to be appraised, have legal documents created, updated deeds need to be created, etc. In order to pay for this program,

there would be an increase in the earned income tax, which currently is at 1.2%. Earned income tax is only paid by working residents of the Township. The amount that would be added on to the current EIT tax is .1% to .25%. The money would be put into an open preservation fund, which would be used to purchase property, pay legal bills and potentially used towards the Township parks. There will be a public meeting on June 18, 2025, at the Fire Company, to provide a presentation to Township residents. The group that is proposing this program has stated that there are 300 owners and 17,000 acres available to apply for the program.

The Comprehensive Plan shows the current preserved land through Northampton County. Areas that cannot be counted would include steep slopes, wetlands and there are other criteria that would exclude a property from being eligible. Cindy Miller looked at the population and ages of the residents in Lehigh Township and we are looking at approximately 6,023 people that might be impacted. When the land is appraised, it will come in lower, how will the Township make up the difference in the loss of tax income; she feels that taxes will have to be raised. Cindy Miller suggested that the group come to the Ad Hoc meeting on June 25, 2025, provide a brief presentation and discuss the program with the Committee.

Dave Shulman requested that Alice Rehrig provide how much money would be brought in from a .25% increase to the EIT for the Ad Hoc Meeting. Michael Corriere should double check to see if this applies to EIT only or both EIT and real estate taxes. Michael Corriere stated that when the County purchases a property it is a fee simple purchase, which is usually a high six or seven figures depending on the acreage. Dave Shulman would also like to confirm that the money can be used towards recreation. Michael Corriere will also confirm what value the County uses to calculate the taxes collected. Cindy Miller stated that this information is important, what impact will it have on the Township budget. The Board of Supervisors would have to vote to add this as a referendum on the ballot. The community would then vote for or against the program.

Kristin Soldridge stated that if a person wanted their property preserved, it would be preserved already. There are very few properties in the Township that are viable for this program that is being proposed. There is not enough information being provided on how this is going to impact the Township. Cindy Miller stated that years ago the Township had a meeting and all the farmers came out to the meeting. They asked that the Township not regulate their land, their land is their retirement. Once you go into this program, you lose development rights. She has voted no for this program, she feels she does not have the right to tell farmers what they can and cannot do with their property.

Kristin Soldridge stated that the Board of Supervisors have talked about raising taxes, the School District taxes are going up 4%, people have not recovered from COVID and the bad economy. Now you want to add an additional tax on to people when it only benefits the person who is putting their property in the program. The Township residents will not have use of the land put into the program; it still will remain private property. Kristin Soldridge requested that the Ad Hoc Committee send a letter to the Board of Supervisors after the June meeting, with bullet points of how this impacts the Township both negative and positive. There has been a lot of work put in the Zoning Ordinance, SALDO and Comprehensive Plan to make sure that Township does not get over run by development.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

#### ADJOURN

Cindy Miller made a motion to adjourn. Tim Bartlett seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.