

NORTH EAST TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

June 2, 2025

Minutes

Call to Order: Vern called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Present: Vern, Char, Dennis, Matt, LeAnn and Jay.

Minutes: Minutes of the May 5, 2025 meeting were reviewed. Char motioned for approval; Matt seconded; approved.

Old Business:

1. Vicki Stetson and Dan Adamus discussed an update of the walkway plans for property parcel 37-005-053.0-011.00, Mellon Heritage Foundation (MU) and property parcel 37-003-053.0-028.00, Howard Riefstahl (R-2) as discussed during the April 7, 2025 meeting. A map was presented indicating two parcels that Riefstahl intends to keep; and two areas that 4NINE intends to purchase on behalf of Mellon Foundation. It was understood that the purchased land must be deeded to Mellon Foundation. A surveyor will be retained to prepare the appropriate plans for submittal to Jay for Preliminary review. After the PC reviews them, Riefstahl, or his designee, should take them to County Planning for review and approval. Then, they must come back to the PC. It was noted that the parcels should not have a separate ID # from Mellon's existing property. Once the PC approves the plans, then they would go to the Supervisors for final approval.

It was also mentioned that Mellon's parcels on Bank Street need to be consolidated with Mellon's main parcel. Vern relayed to Dan that that would be a separate issue for a later discussion.

New Business: Josh Bostwick, Gulf Road, was present to discuss subdividing parcel 37-026-079.0-005.00. Currently there are 2 houses on the Bostwick property. He would like to subdivide one house and about 2 or 3 acres to the north into a separate parcel. This would include the well and pump house. No zoning change is being requested. Josh will meet with Jay to sketch out the proposed subdivision. He will have to return for a Preliminary review by PC. The remaining parcel is in Clean and Green.

Discussions:

1. Josh Bostwick discussed his desire to lease 67 acres of his property along Gulf Road to the New York state line to a solar developer. Parcel 37-026-079.0-005.00, which is currently zoned A-2. The property was last farmed in 1995. His brother had planned on planting grapes but passed away, and grapes were never planted. The solar array would tie in directly to the grid on Gulf Road thus no batteries would be required. Grazing could occur under the panels.

Vern discussed how the PC had spent over a year studying solar issues, reviewing what other municipalities were doing, and keeping current on what the state was doing. We selected an area for the Renewable Energy District that would have the least impact on the community and was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Dennis mentioned the goal in the Comp Plan to preserve ag heritage and farmland. Thus, we created the Renewable Energy District and it was approved by the Supervisors. Josh's property is not within the Renewable Energy District so he was informed that we could not approve his proposal. Vern emphasized how we cannot make exceptions, noting that NE was accessible to the grid, therefore very ideal, however intrusive it might be to neighbors. Nick Mobilia mentioned that through the PA Farm Bureau, they are working to steer solar and wind projects away from prime ag land and more toward marginal lands.

2. Kenneth Spaeder also wanted to discuss his option for developing a solar array on his property on Findley Lake Road, parcel 37-028-113.0-006.00, which is currently zoned R-1. His property is 150' from the Renewable Energy District. Based on the prior discussion, he was also told that his property is not within the Renewable Energy District and therefore, we could not approve his plan. If we made an exception for him because of proximity, then we could be faced with additional similar requests.

Walk-Ins/Other items: None

Motion to adjourn: Dennis made the motion to adjourn, LeAnn seconded.



Charlene M. Kerr, Secretary