

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held _____ 20_____

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

PUBLIC MEETING

MINUTES of January 8, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Brimfield Township Town Hall

Present: Chairman Tom Johnson, Debbie Darlas, Tom Sargent, Kolette Woloszynek, Bill Anderson

Alternates: Carl Riggerbach, Robert Radoslovich

Absent:

Staff: Mike Hlad, Economic Development Director and Zoning Inspector, Kayla Nealon, Zoning Secretary, and Todd Peetz with Portage County Regional Planning

The Zoning Commission meeting is called to order by Tom Johnson at 7:00 PM on January 8, 2026.

Roll call:

Anderson: Here Darlas: Here Johnson: Here Sargent: Here
Woloszynek: Here Riggerbach: Here Radoslovich: Here

MOTION #2026-01

Bill Anderson made a motion to nominate Tom Johnson as Chairman. His motion was seconded by Debbie Darlas and passed unanimously.

MOTION #2026-02

Tom Johnson made a motion to nominate Debbie Darlas as Vice Chairman. His motion was seconded by Bill Anderson and passed unanimously.

Trustee Sue Fields swore in all members of the Zoning Commission.

Tom Johnson said he would like to add a discussion on data centers to the agenda.

MOTION #2026-03

Debbie Darlas made a motion to accept the modified meeting agenda. Her motion was seconded by Kolette Woloszynek and passed unanimously.

MOTION #2026-04

Debbie Darlas made a motion to approve the December 11, 2025 meeting minutes. His motion was seconded by Robert Radoslovich and passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION:

Maximum height of buildings and structures with Regional Planning Commission:

Tom Johnson read the proposed change to the definition of building height. Todd Peetz explained where the wall of the building hits the overhang is considered the eave, and where that intersection lies is how the Ohio Building Code defines eave.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-375-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held

20

When asked how the eave is measured on a building without an overhang, Todd Peetz said it would be measured at the top of the wall, and on a parapet wall, the top of the parapet is the height. Mike Hlad noted that measurement is contrary to the views of the Fire Chief. Todd Peetz said the height of the parapet is not as important to life-safety and building issues, which is why the parapet can typically be higher if it is needed to hide rooftop equipment. Tom Sargent added that this is why Chief Mullaly was not concerned with the parapet height since it doesn't affect safely removing people from the building. Bill Anderson agreed and said Chief Mullaly was not concerned with manufacturing or office buildings, but rescuing people from hotels and motels, and he needs to be able to reach them with his 24' extension ladder.

Todd Peetz proposed tweaking the definition of building height to "The vertical distance measured from the average elevation of the proposed finished grade at the front of the building to the eave or where the parapet wall meets the roofline." Tom Sargent felt this was more precise since buildings would be proposed without eaves. Kolette Woloszynek suggested having separate ways to measure buildings; one for buildings with an eave and one for buildings with a flat roof.

MOTION #2026-05

Bill Anderson made a motion to send the proposed definition of eave to Regional Planning for them to review and refine. The proposed language defines eave as "the horizontal edge of the roof where it overhangs, or, if it is a flat roof, the top of the roofline". His motion was seconded by **Tom Johnson** and passed unanimously.

Data Centers:

Tom Johnson wanted to expound on the previous meetings discussion on data centers and how they affect the residents in these communities. He said the data centers consume lots of water and electricity which has residents seeing a roughly 5-7% increase in the cost of their electric bill. He said improvements to the water systems are necessary as the buildings are so massive, and it seems the communities are experiencing the brunt of that expense.

Kolette Woloszynek questioned why developers are not fully responsible for all costs related to data centers. Tom Sargent talked about an Amazon data center being built north of Cincinnati on roughly 600 acres of farmland, where the building has its own power plant and water system being constructed as part of the project. He said once the water is used to cool the equipment, it is considered contaminated and he reiterated that the quantity of water and electricity used causes a strain on infrastructure. Tom Sargent noted the developers seem to pick on Townships with less zoning restrictions. Kolette Woloszynek said originally, some people felt this sort of development would be positive, but now that we see what it does to these communities, we can better prepare ourselves.

Tom Johnson said Shalersville decided to consider data centers as a conditional use, however, he would like to entertain the idea of listing them as a prohibited use. He does not want to see the community experience an increase in utility costs.

Bill Anderson said if one was to be constructed in an agricultural area, it could be harmful as they don't have the necessary amounts of water. He felt the lack of water in certain areas of the Township could be used as a lever to prohibit data centers. Bill Anderson referenced the small data center in Akron that Ohio Edison supplies, and said it takes two transformers, a substation, two ten-megawatt backup generators, and a battery system to power it. He did not recall the City of Akron being charged with additional costs, but the data center consumed all the construction costs and all electricity usage. This center does not have a massive amount of water usage, and they recycle water which is contained to the site. Mike Hlad said the Township can write their code to require that water is recycled on-site and was concerned that prohibiting the use would open the Township up to a lawsuit.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held _____ 20_____

Todd Peetz felt the use probably best fits into the H-I District because of the water and electricity usage. He said Rootstown is using very vague bullet points which make things more difficult for the BZA and felt the Commission should be very detailed in their concerns so that it is clear for our BZA. He added that Shalersville was also concerned with neighboring Townships experiencing spillovers of the increased utility costs. Todd Peetz said he would recommend a heavier-use location, as well as strong language that will assist the BZA. He said it's a valid concern that these uses come in and impact residents' utility bills, and it is not fair to residents. Mike Hlad suggested that Todd Peetz merge the language from Shalersville and language he provided from the APA, creating a draft for the Commission to review in February.

Resident Phil Ridenour talked about a facility where a township had restricted the size of data centers, so the developer built two buildings at the maximum allowable size right next to one another and connected the electrical conduit from one building to the next. Tom Johnson felt the Commission should prohibit connecting two facilities together. Mike Hlad felt if Regional Planning drafts language, the Commission could refine it and then send it to the attorneys at the Ohio Township Association for their review.

Resident David Stewart said data centers are a huge concern for him as he, like many others, lives near an industrial area.

Tom Johnson said since prohibition may not stand scrutiny in court, they may need to heavily restrict them instead. Mike Hlad said the reason the Township was able to prohibit recreational marijuana uses was because the state allowed us to. Bill Anderson said if prohibiting the use is too risky, we should move forward with new language that heavily restricts them.

Todd Peetz said Rootstown did not have any industrial areas over 30 acres, so they decided to enact a 30-acre minimum, but they are playing with fire because a developer could easily buy several parcels and combine them.

MOTION #2026-06

Tom Johnson made a motion to request language from Regional Planning regarding data centers that integrates Shalersville Township's Zoning Amendment and the language from the American Planning Association. He would also like to entertain the idea of including a prohibition in the language. His motion was seconded by **Kolette Woloszynek** and passed unanimously.

Town Center Architectural Standards and Lighting Requirements:

Bill Anderson and Robert Radoslovich provided lighting drawings to the Commission. Bill Anderson said the fluted pole is cheaper and quick to replace if hit by a vehicle. Also included in the drawings were accessories he felt the Township may want to attach to the poles, including flag brackets, banner brackets, and receptacles for Christmas lights. He also provided details of the helical anchors for the pole bases. The bases are not concrete and can be unscrewed and easily replaced if hit, whereas concrete bases require the entire base to be dug up. Specifications for junction boxes for electrical systems which provide the conduit system protection if under a sidewalk were also included in the packet. Bill Anderson said the idea is to get these into our Town Center standards.

Mike Hlad thanked Bill and Robert for their hard work. He suggested sending this information to Regional Planning to create a new Appendix for the Zoning Resolution.

MOTION #2026-07

Bill Anderson made a motion to send the information to Regional Planning to create an Appendix to the Zoning Resolution. His motion was seconded by **Robert Radoslovich** and passed unanimously.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO 10148

Held

20

Agricultural Properties:

The Commission reviewed the four questions they came up with in December. Tom Johnson read them aloud for those present at the meeting.

Kolette Woloszynek suggested to change the word “opportunity” to “fair offer” in question #2 since everyone has the opportunity to sell property.

Mike Hlad said if the Commission is looking at limiting subdivisions in the Township, and they decide to remove subdivisions from the R-2 District, keeping them in R-3 and R-4 only, most available parcels will be eliminated. He added that some of the large parcels are part of Western Reserve Land Conservancy already, and others are industrial districts that don't allow subdivisions. However, he reminded the Commission that when you stop a developer from developing one way, they will find another way. Since the subdivision regulations have become so stringent, he said developers and their attorneys have become very creative and now develop condominiums with their own associations and construct the maximum density allowed. Condominium law takes precedent over anything the Township has in the Zoning Resolution, and he reiterated that if we stop them one way, they will find a new way to develop around it.

Tom Johnson said that condos require water and sewer, not well and septic, so the return on investment is installing water and sewer and bringing it down State Route 43 or Howe Road. Mike Hlad said the Township is using TIF money to leverage water and sewer being brought down State Route 43 which would be a benefit to that area. He said the TIFs are subject to Trustee approval but he wanted to give the Commission all the options because there is always more than one way of doing things. He also suggested changing the subdivision requirements to a minimum of half- or one-acre lots. Tom Johnson voiced concern with that route because the developer could always appear for the BZA and be granted variances. Mike Hlad said that any denial of the Zoning Inspector can be appealed to the BZA, so if variances being granted is the concern, he recommended eliminating subdivisions in the R-2 district.

Bill Anderson inquired about the former sand pit off Mogadore Road, asking for clarification if they had rezoned the area, and Mike Hlad said it was rezoned to R-3. Bill Anderson then asked if there were any restrictions on the lots since it allows subdivisions, and Mike Hlad said there are no restrictions, however, that area does not have public water or sewer. He said without water and sewer, and being zoned R-3, it should be well-protected from condominium development.

Mike Hlad reminded the Commission that they cannot prohibit new homes, but by removing subdivisions from the R-2 District, it eliminates much of the area they can be built in. He mentioned that Todd Peetz had previously recommended merging the R-3 and R-4 Districts into one, and possibly R-1 and R-2 as well since the Township has so many different residential districts. By eliminating subdivisions from R-2, R-3 and R-4 are easily merged. He felt they would have the support of the Trustees because they have spoken against overdevelopment and have voiced concern for the volume of kids in the schools.

Kolette Woloszynek left the meeting at 8:00 pm, and Robert Radoslovich became the voting member in her place.

Tom Johnson entertained a motion to send the removal of subdivisions in the R-2 District to Regional Planning.

MOTION #2026-08

Bill Anderson made a motion to send the removal of subdivisions in the R-2 District to Regional Planning for their review. His motion was seconded by **Robert Radoslovich** and passed unanimously.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held _____ 20_____

Mike Hlad requested a motion to request approval from the Trustees to send out the survey to property owners of 20 acres or more in the R-3 and R-4 Districts. Regional Planning will provide the addresses of property owners.

MOTION #2026-09

Tom Sargent made a motion to send the questionnaire to the Trustees for their approval so that it can be sent to property owners of 20 acres or more within the R-3 and R-4 Districts. His motion was seconded by **Bill Anderson** and passed unanimously.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan:

Mike Hlad said Todd would contact PARTA to send a representative when we discuss the chapter on transportation.

The focus this evening will be on Chapter 4, Natural Resources. Mike Hlad said the maps may be updated due to changes in the wetlands. Todd Peetz said the good news is that they don't usually change drastically in a few years. Regarding the Cultural Resources section (page 27), Todd Peetz said after checking the historic structures story map, 39 structures are listed but after revisiting the sites, many had been demolished, so this list will need updating. He also would like to provide local businesses with QR codes to direct people to the story maps on the website. Regional Planning also hopes to use QR codes to focus on farmland preservation and to encourage buy local programs for local farmers. The idea is to make these maps interactive so residents can easily find all the local agricultural products in the county, benefiting local farmers. Tom Johnson asked if that would be part of Chapter 4, and Todd Peetz said yes, it can be included.

Mike Hlad said a Trustee would like to revisit the goals page with the department heads. He plans to put it on the agenda so they can discuss it again. Todd Peetz said that at the county level, they are discussing how these plans are implemented and focusing on where their successes and struggles are. They identify them, add anything new or of interest from the Trustees or Department Heads, including any new technology or updates to laws, and work on the list simultaneously during the review of the plan. Todd Peetz also noted the story map, transportation map, and new PARTA routes into Brimfield with bus stops will need to be noted when we update Chapter 6. Chapter 5, Community Services will be the focus in February.

Lot Size Requirements for Medical Uses:

Mike Hlad read Section 400.10 B. 51. (B.), "Unless a greater acreage is specified in the district requirements, the site shall be comprised of a minimum of two (2) acres, exclusive of road right-of-way." He explained that the oral surgery center that was recently approved by the BZA did not meet the two-acre site requirement, as their lot is roughly 1.956 acres.

Tom Sargent said there are others that do not meet these criteria, and Mike Hlad agreed, using several dental offices as examples. Mike Hlad said he was unsure why this requirement exists and felt the entire section should be removed. He understood the need for additional requirements for uses like gas stations or mini storage facilities. Bill Anderson agreed, saying there are many facilities in town that do not meet these criteria.

Mike Hlad noted the code has requirements in place for primary and accessory uses, so he did not feel '#51. Institutions for Human Medical Care, such as but not limited to Hospitals, Clinics, Mental Health Care Facilities, and Nursing Homes' is necessary. When asked what they would replace the section with, he felt following the specific zoning district as it is already written is sufficient. He said there was little criteria for the proposed hotel, but extra requirements of the oral surgeon who was already providing ingress/egress, traffic patterns, handicap parking, distances from property lines, etc., as part of their conditional use request.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held _____ 20_____

Tom Sargent asked Mike Hlad if there have been any new medical facilities built since he was hired, and Mike Hlad said the VA Center, however, their lot is already larger than two acres and they met all the other criteria anyway.

Todd Peetz felt it was fine to remove #51 entirely. Bill Anderson felt nothing being removed could hurt the Township in the future, and the text being removed has sufficient requirements elsewhere in the code.

Tom Johnson inquired about modifying the I-C District, and Mike Hlad said yes, that Todd Peetz would make the changes, striking out any references to #51.

MOTION #2026-10

Tom Johnson made a motion to remove #51 from Chapter 400.10 B., and for Regional Planning to make the subsequent changes in the I-C District to reflect the removal. His motion was seconded by **Bill Anderson** and passed unanimously.

The Commission members decided to schedule public hearings for the amendments being sent to Regional Planning. The schedule will be as follows:

- February 12th at 6:15 pm – Chapter 10, Definitions (building height and eave)
- February 12th at 6:25 pm – Adding a new Appendix for Lighting Requirements
- February 12th at 6:35 pm – Removal of subdivisions in the R-2 District
- February 12th at 6:45 pm – Removal of #51. Institutions for Human Medical Care, such as but not limited to Hospitals, Clinics, Mental Health Care Facilities, and Nursing Homes from Chapter 400.10 B.

MOTION #2026-11

Tom Sargent made a motion to schedule four public hearings on Thursday, February 12th, 2026, beginning at 6:15 pm. His motion was seconded by **Tom Johnson** and passed unanimously.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Tom Sargent asked the Commission if any of them were notified that they were being videotaped at the previous meeting. He said Trustee Coia had recorded their meeting and posted it to Facebook. He said they were not given the courtesy of being told Trustee Coia was filming and he was not happy to find out days later. He added that in the spirit of transparency, that was anything but transparent.

Debbie Darlas noted it was difficult to hear the conversations in the recorded version. Tom Sargent added that while they are on the Zoning Board, there were residents present who were also included in the conversation. He said he would like to consult legal counsel to see how such situation should be handled in the future if it were to happen again.

Mike Hlad said it seems there is a misconception on social media that the Zoning Commission makes all the rules which is incorrect. They make a recommendation which can be approved or denied at both Regional Planning and Trustee levels. He said that when this issue was discussed last, the Commission had been asked by the attorney to remain off social media and YouTube, and to encourage people to attend the meetings in person. Those that cannot attend are welcome to submit written statements to be read into the record. Mike Hlad added that Regional Planning Commission meetings are not taped or broadcast – they follow the Ohio Revised Code just as the Commission does to keep it simple and legal.

Bill Anderson said the tape was being used for a political cause. He added that in Trustee Coia's weekend Facebook videos, about 60% of what is stated is accurate, and it is always construed to make himself look good and to divide the community.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO. 10148

Held _____ 20_____

Debbie Darlas said we need to concentrate on the Township as a whole, not matters that are divisive. Bill Anderson believed that if someone were to record with the intent of posting to a personal Facebook page, an attorney would say they need to state their name and that they are recording to those being recorded. Mike Hlad advised the Commission they would need to make a formal motion if they are making a request for a legal opinion.

Tom Sargent did not believe the actions were ethical. He said the Commission holds open meetings and minutes are taken and posted to the Township website; they do not hide anything. Tom Sargent added the Commission listens to the residents that are present, which has always been part of their process.

Debbie Darlas asked if the BZA has experienced being recorded by Trustee Coia, and Mike Hlad said that to his knowledge, Trustee Coia has not recorded the BZA. Debbie Darlas said the public seems to confuse the Zoning Commission and the BZA. She said it is not that the BZA is not doing their job, but most of the flack seems to fall to the Zoning Commission. She reiterated that everyone needs to work together to make the Township better and not be so divided.

MOTION #2026-12

Tom Sargent made a motion to consult with the Township's Legal Department regarding procedures for when a Trustee is recording a meeting without notifying those present and rebroadcasting it on their personal and/or Trustee Facebook page(s). He would like clarification of what is allowed and not allowed, and if video is recorded, what should be done prior to recording for consent of those present. His motion was seconded by **Bill Anderson** and passed unanimously.

Bill Anderson added that a large part of the problem is that most people don't understand the purpose or role of the Zoning Commission.

Mike Hlad updated the Commission on several matters and projects including:

- Human Bean is planning to purchase the former Van's Tire building. They have two proposals; one to tear down and rebuild, and one to keep the existing building and completely alter it. Tom Johnson asked if there were any EPA concerns and Mike Hlad said this is very preliminary and soil tests had not been done to his knowledge.
- The oral surgery center was approved at the BZA level, and he is currently working on a lot split and access easement. This project will also utilize tax increment financing.
- The Township has been nominated for a development award for the Assisted Living Center. The project is bringing 83 jobs to the community, and they plan to open in the spring. It has been a big win for Brimfield and the Port Authority, plus it was a goal in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Mike Hlad added that many goals the Commission set in the previous plan had been accomplished.
- There is no update on a ribbon cutting ceremony for the VA Center.
- A developer is working on a proposal to construct a hotel by Lowes and Kohls, but there are lots of hurdles with zoning regulations and deed restrictions between Lowes, Kohls, and Walmart. The access easement hurdles are challenging and could slow development of that parcel.
- Mike Hlad said he and Todd Peetz have been discussing the unbuildable piece of property landlocked near Lowes and Walmart that was previously donated to the Township and then returned back to the developer. There was previous discussion about building an amphitheater there. He told the board they should discuss ideas for the greenspace, possibly considering it as an addition to McGuire Park. The property is owned by the developer; however, they don't want to pay taxes perpetually on an unbuildable, landlocked property.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting

BEAR GRAPHICS 800-325-8094 FORM NO 10148

Held _____ 20____

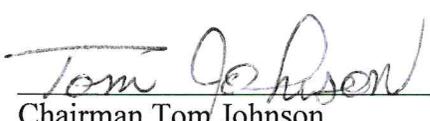
- The developer interested in building next to Dunkin Donuts has been turned away three times. He is now proposing a Chick-Fil-A as part of his mixed-use project. Mike Hlad said he has yet to agree, and the developer is supposed to be doing some homework to see if a sit-down restaurant is plausible. This developer has many restaurant connections, so this could be a good opportunity to obtain a sit-down restaurant.

SET NEXT MEETING:

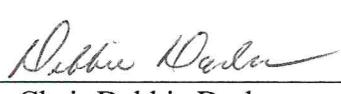
The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 12th, 2026.**

MOTION #2026-13

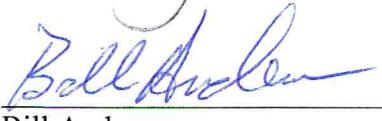
A motion was made by **Debbie Darlas** to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m., seconded by **Tom Sargent**. The motion passed unanimously.



 Chairman Tom Johnson



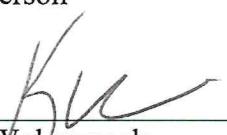
 Vice Chair Debbie Darlas



 Bill Anderson



 Tom Sargent



 Kolette Woloszynek



 Alternate Carl Riggerbach



 Alternate Robert Radoslovich