

Phoenixville Planning Commission

MINUTES

Thursday – May 14, 2026

6:00 PM

- I. Call to Order
 - A. 6:00PM

- II. Pledge of Allegiance
 - A. Complete

- III. Roll Call
 - A. Members Present
 1. Catherine Bianco
 2. Amanda Irwin
 3. Josh Gould
 4. Joe Sikora
 5. Raffaello Di Napoli (6:02PM)
 6. Tom Carnevale
Solicitor Scott Denlinger
Engineer Leanna Colubriale
Land Planner Judy Goldstein
Borough Manager Jean Krack
Planning Director Dave Boelker
Borough Council Liaison Brian Moore
 - B. Excused
 1. Jahan Tavangar

- IV. Public Participation

Sarah Morris – 620 Onward Ave. – Representing her family and herself, to oppose the townhomes, citing circulation concerns.

- V. Approval of Minutes
 - A. March 12, 2026
Motion to approve as submitted by DiNapoli.
Seconded by Gould.
Carnevale abstains.
Motion carried 5-0.

- VI. Updates / Correspondence
 - A. Denlinger reminded everyone that the Planning Commission's role is determine whether a proposed project complies with the Borough's ordinances, regardless of whether the commissioners and/or the public likes or dislikes the project.

- VII. New Business

- A. **2026-05 - Station Hill SLDL Plan - Audubon Land Development Corp. - 15-9-76.1, 15-9-78.1:** The development project and plan propose fourteen (14) twin units fronting on Vanderslice Street, divided by Gay Street. Each unit is proposed to have a front porch, garage and driveway. Three (3) parking spaces will be provided for each unit (1 garage/2 driveway). The plan will also provide for stormwater management, landscaping, utilities and lighting.

Presenting:

Kestra Kelly, BL Companies, Civil Engineer, Bernadette Kearney, Counsel. Kearney revisited the project summary, recognizing there are trees that are going to be a concern, and they are not taking it lightly, wanting to respect the loss of trees, and work with the Borough's consultants in order to handle the removal and associated replantings sensitively.

Kelly discussed the sketch plan comments and how they looked at alternative unit types and circulation, ultimately arriving at that the twins ultimately provide a better product, even if the alternate layout provided more density. All structures will be constructed according to the HARB recommendations that will be forthcoming.

Review Letters

RVE:

- 23 – Widening existing street, seeking relief. Kelly will be reevaluating that topic.
- 25 – Clear sight triangles.
- 27 – Driveway grading not exceeding 4%.
- 30 – Equipping garages with EV ready infrastructure.
- 35 – Additional accessible crosswalk to be constructed.
- Extension of sidewalk to Main Street. Kelly will look into the possibility.
- 80 – Garage layout will be revised to make sure the parking is compliant, and not in one of the front yards.

Carnevale/Kelly – Comments on the structure of the retaining wall and bmp proximity.

54 – Irwin/Colubriale – Management of peak rates in a select number of areas. There is a portion where bypass flow skirts improvements. All impervious will be captured and treated. A portion of the site is not captured, but is pervious space, and a likely de minimus waiver request. Denlinger provided a background on the legal understanding of de minimus typically being 10% or less. Kelly will provide backup for this at a future submission.

40 – Irwin re: environmentally sensitive features. Colubriale relayed that RVE is requesting identification and a breakdown of the features to be shown so the extent can be seen. Irwin/Colubriale discussed stabilization methodologies. Bianco/Kelly – steep slopes retained at 70%, very steep slopes 80%, woodlands 50%. Efforts will be made to minimize and exhibit such disturbance limits.

Sikora/Kelly – Comments on showing an accurate tree removal plan page, and the reasons why they could not be preserved. Kelly commented that the tree replacement schedule as per Borough requirements has been presented.

Denlinger – 2 – Depth of the lots on the eastern half of the tract will need to be noted. Movement of the Vanderslice discharge, how that drainage movement would affect other discharges or easement areas. Kelly noted that the offsite water is continuing to be kept separate from the development's water. The volume and intensity are not changing.

Gilmore:

Goldstein – Suggested notes be placed on plan for parking requirement in the garages, not to be used for any other purpose. Will comply.

Goldstein provided comments on tree preservation as Colubriale had, existing vegetation preservation, reasons for removal, plan needs to clearly show what is to be retained or removed. Any trees to remain require specified tree protection during construction.

Goldstein added comments on requiring additional plantings and screening, as well as specifics on the species of the trees to be planted, focusing on only native species being planted.

Goldstein also recommended the sidewalk on the east extends to Main Street as well.

Irwin/Kelly – Comments on requiring expansion on what the tree report's statements mean when stating "poor health." Kelly indicated that they will work with the arborist on expanding upon the verbiage used.

Irwin/Kelly – Comments as to the legal mechanism to enforce that garages can only be used for vehicular parking.

Moore/Boelker – Comments on open space requirements not being triggered at 14 units.

DiNapoli/Kelly – Discussion on the tree report and its vagueness, lack of detail, breakdowns, or definitions. Kelly indicated it will be updated.

Carnevale/Goldstein – Comments to the confusing nature of the "S" on the demolition plan does not match the landscape plan.

Denlinger – Provided comments as to being providing reasonable access, requiring strong justification for street tree removal if deemed needed.

Moore echoed the need for significant additional detail and justification for the overall topic of trees, very particularly the mature Borough street trees.

Bianco/Kelly – Discussion of alternate layout and preservation of trees, and a maintenance requirement of the retaining walls being placed within the community's maintenance responsibilities. Kelly relayed the location of the retaining walls not being close to the usable rear yards.

Sikora requested a section might be provided to show the slopes.

Carnevale/Boelker/Kelly/Krack – Discussion points on reversing into streets, having the Borough arborist review the reports.

DiNapoli suggested that an ornithologist be used. Goldstein suggested that the applicant should show that there are no endangered species inhabiting the trees.

Irwin/Kelly/DiNapoli discussed the alternate layout not being any benefit to street tree retention, but the proposal creating the better, more usable lots.

Public Comment:

Henrik Teglbjaerg – 338 St. Mary’s Street – Comments on prior proposals in the Borough, as relates to this proposal, healthy woodlands, specific trees, a natural part of town, and losing nature.

Chris Andrei – 425 Vanderslice Street – Recommended an independent arborist, expressed concern of two-way traffic already, drainage, pedestrian and children safety, tree and wildlife preservation, requesting a traffic study.

Chris Major – 545 Onward Ave. – Comments on clearcutting not being infill, environmental impact assessment, safety regarding traffic. Has the “Township” done a tree survey, does the applicant justify the density, would the TAC be advised of this application.

Liz Stauffer – 2 Franklin Ave. – Provided concerns of traffic, parking, loss of green space, building on steep slopes, tree removal.

Klementina Budnik – 334 Saint Mary’s St. – Cited statements on the applicant’s and engineer’s websites promoting community-centric development, and asking the Applicant to uphold those values and to incorporate those sentiments into the designs.

Gordan Hamman – 7 Franklin Ave. – Provided concerns about the loss of recreational area for kids, traffic, building on steep slopes, not providing any.

Christina Nestor – 429 Vanderslice Street - Expressed concern over parking availability with additional development, traffic and pedestrian safety, encouraging a traffic study, canopy loss, not wanting Modern Farmhouse style home on the street.

Maryann Miklavic - 546 Gauge Street, East Pikeland – Commented on housing development not being an attraction to Phoenixville, as cited in travel and leisure magazine recently.

Justin Gordon – 103 Pennsylvania Avenue/TAC – Provided that they will have comments from the TAC will be forthcoming, discussed the loss of mature trees versus planting newer, small caliper ones, and additional environmental concerns.

B. 2026-06 - Habitat for Humanity Church Street Condos Sketch - Hankin Ventures, LLC - 374 Church Street - 15-9-358: The development project and plan propose forty-eight (48) apartment units [(18) 1-bedroom and (30) 2-bedroom units] and on-site parking.

Tom Carnevale recused himself from this project, Habitat of Humanity, Chester County being a long-time client.

Presenting:

Neal Fisher – Hankin Ventures, LLC. – Fisher provided a background on Hankin, Hankin Manor at 115 Buchanan, and the relationship with Habitat. Fisher summarized how Habitat and Hankin will blend business models, Hankin being the larger builder of the shell, Habitat with the sweat equity model, with prospective owners adding actual labor to the site. Fisher stated that they are looking for some initial feedback.

Review Letters:

Gilmore:

Goldstein provided a summary of the collaborative discussions regarding parking supply, not needing a zoning variance, trash enclosures being interior, mailroom, circulation, landscaping, buffering, EV charging among others.

Sikora provided interest in this model, having experience with Habitat of Montgomery County.

Moore/Fisher – Discussion on building height, being 4-stories, that stormwater management can be handled in the parking lot, with the building not covering the entire lot like many storage buildings do.

Irwin/Fisher – Discussion on methodology of building, ownership, sweat equity, condominium/HOA, etc.

Gould/Fisher – Discussion on that the existing structures needing being taken down to provide for this; pedestrian access from Church, but no vehicular access.

DiNapoli/Fisher – Discussion points of vehicular circulation, parking, number of access points, package delivery, turning analysis, underbuilding parking.

Bianco/Fisher – Discussion on outdoor space, bike storage, indoor recreation/common space.

Denlinger/Fisher – Clarified that Habitat is the equitable owner pursuant to an agreement or sale with Phoenixville Storage Partners LLC, which remains the record owner.

Public Comment:

None.

VIII.

Old Business

- A. **2026-03 - 101 High Street - Providence Capital Group, LLC - 101 High Street - 15-5-533, 534, 534.1, 534.2, 534.3:** The project and plan propose to combine five (5) parcels at the location to build a single, 4-story multifamily residential building with associated stormwater management, parking, landscaping, lighting and other improvements.

Presenting: Joel Comanda, InLand Design Group. Comanda discussed the steps they have taken since the last presentation. They worked through architecture, adding a chamfer, identifying 1st floor space use, keeping the building at the same site. They are seeking a recommendation.

Review Letters

RVE:

Colubriale/Comanda – Discussion on retaining wall interaction with stormwater beds. Comanda will provide backup data for the size and placement of the retaining walls.

A note to be added regarding private hauling.

Carnevale/Comanda – Comments on multiple retaining walls around and as part of the project.

Gilmore:

Goldstein – Providing EV charging identification, removal of reserved on-street parking on Dayton, additional landscaping details were discussed including size and location plantings, other ways to soften the building wall, landscape species.

Irwin suggested advance warning sign be placed for a hidden driveway. Comanda will discuss with RVE and the Borough.

Gould commented that a lesser dense, smaller project, might require less waivers. Comanda noted that a smaller project would not be economically viable based on the property's grade and dual front yards as a corner property. Solicitor Denlinger advised that economic hardship along with physical characteristics of the property may justify one or more waivers. Typically the Applicant must present evidence to support this position, but then the burden would shift to objectors to rebut any such provided evidence.

Carnevale expressed concern of the vehicle egress of the building onto High Street.

Bianco echoed some of the earlier concerns, and fire apparatus access.

Commission Discussion:

Significant discussion over the legal considerations of recommending granting waivers, particularly waivers regarding excavating within 3' of the property line and clear sight triangle versus prohibition on front yard parking.

Solicitor Comments:

The role of the Commission is to assess the project as is related to the SALDO and ZO, not aesthetics.

Public Comment:

None.

Recommendation:

Carnevale recommended the approval of the project with the following conditions:

- Standard action memo conditions,
- Satisfying all consultant reviews comments, and
- Providing “hidden driveway” sign or other caution to pedestrians and motorists as appropriate and in a location acceptable to the Borough Engineer.
- Recommending the waivers as listed:
 1. §22-303 – to allow the submission to be reviewed as a preliminary/final plan in lieu of preliminary plan only.
 2. §22-411.3.B – to provide a clear site triangle of 47.4’ in lieu of the required 75’ pending further coordination with Borough Engineer.
 3. §22-414.10.E – to allow the two driveways to be located closer than 60 feet from the radius of the intersection upon further review by the Borough Engineer and/or Traffic Engineer.
 4. §22-505.5.B – to allow grading within 3’ of the property line conditioned upon the Borough Engineer examining the projects retaining walls’ as well as the adjacent walls’ stability.
 5. §22-Attachment 3 Landscape Guidelines – to not have to provide the building façade planting requirements along Dayton and Hight Streets.

Irwin seconded.

Motion passed 5-1.

- B. **2020-03 - Odessa Major Amendment – Franklin Phoenixville, LP – 15-4-8.2, 15-4-8.4, 15-4-56, 15-4-56.1, 15-4-49:** The Major Amendment proposes a new circulation pattern through the development, connecting at the north of the site to a newly-proposed project along Township Line Road that itself makes an aligned connection to Gauge Street in East Pikeland Township.

Presenting:

Kestra Kelly, BL Companies, Civil Engineer, seeking a recommendation, additional open space, additional overflow parking, reconfigured Road D to match the record plan, boundary changes, a 2-way entrance to the apartment building. The prior waivers are remaining as requests and approved.

Denlinger/Kelly – Discussion on waiver retention, reduction. Kelly confirmed that no additional waivers are being requested for the Major Amendment, and there is not any change in location or any increase in the extent of the previously granted waivers for the project.

Review Letters

RVE:

- 6 – Abrupt end of Road D. A demonstration of how cars are to turn around, or signage to accommodate, potentially physical barriers or curbing. Will comply.
- 30 – Open Space areas need to be re-exhibited. Will comply.
- Trail parking has changed, eliminating accessible access to the trail. Direct access is required. Will comply.

Carnevale/Denlinger discussed the separation of the project and proposed neighboring development.

Moore/Kelly discussed trail parking and accessibility.

Gilmore:

Goldstein discussed Road D dead end, trail accessibility, utility conflicts relating to landscaping, then some finer details/drafting errors.

Commission Discussion:

Gould and Kelly discussed that the Traffic Impact Summary is analyzing the delta of the prior analyses for Odessa.

Public Comment:

Marianne Gottschall – 706 Reading Circle, East Pikeland Township – Commented on traffic and sight lines.

Gary Spinner – 534 Gauge Street, East Pikeland Township – Commented on the next project’s connections.

Recommendation:

Irwin made a motion to recommend that Council approve the plan under the condition that the plans shall be revised to ensure that the northern portion of Road ‘D’ does not end in a dead-end road.

Carnevale seconded, offering an amendment that ADA accessible access to the SRT be reviewed and enhanced in a location similar to that provided in the prior approved plans, to the satisfaction of the Borough Engineer.

Irwin accepted.

Motion passed 6-0.

- C. **2026-01 - Township Line Road Development – Franklin Phoenixville, LP - 15-4-44 through 15-4-49:** The proposed development consists of the construction of thirty-three (33) townhouses with private and public open spaces along Township Line Road. The project proposes to connect to the Odessa Development, moving the primary West access road from 918 to 908 Township Line Road, aligning with Gauge Street in East Pikeland Township. A one-way ingress point is proposed at 918 Township Line Road. The creation of local access streets with on-street parking and alleys, public water and sewer, and stormwater management are proposed as part of the project.

Presenting:

Kestra Kelly, BL Companies, Civil Engineer. Not seeking a recommendation. Kelly believes that the ultimate correction to the Road D entrance across from Gauge Street will be Right Only, In and Out, eliminating legal cross-lane traffic.

Review Letters

RVE:

Alley 7 parking area should be reconfigured/defined.
Easements will be required for Odessa connection.

Gilmore:

Comments about dimensional requirements, but it needs to be shown how it meets the streetscape, alley 7 easement, accessible parking, facing of dwellings to an Odessa street, street trees along Road D, coordinated with Odessa, plan coordination needs to be enhanced to handle duplication, buffering and screening with a typical detail, plant sizes, tree removal, evergreen and deciduous mix, tree protection zones, utilizing sidewalk in ROW as Public Open Space needs to be addressed, Open Space Waiver, cluster mailbox detail, native species requirement.

Commission Discussion:

Carnevale - Requests that all trees proposed to be removed are clearly identified.

Irwin/Kelly – A detailed waiver request letter will define the open space deviation.

Moore highlighted that convenient access is required, suggesting that actual open space is provided.

Bianco commented on the heat island effects of all the paving and new trees.

Solicitor Comments:

Denlinger advised to make sure the requested deviation is identified as part of the waiver letter.

Public Comment:

Gary Spinner – 534 Gauge Street, East Pikeland Township – Discussion on right in and right out barriers to be presented.

Solicitor Denlinger stated that the Applicant’s representatives may answer questions as they desire, but that parties must obtain legal advice from their own attorneys.

Ted Schnipper – 553 Gauge Street, East Pikeland Township – Crossover Boulevard is full access, the development will have street lights, half versus full width paving, access points, Gauge Street gates are present.

Marianne Gottschall – 706 Reading Circle, East Pikeland Township – Suggested the applicant coordinate with the Phoenixville School District.

Carol Dielman – 802 Bloom Court, East Pikeland Township - Recommended Commissioners drive Township Line Road, citing traffic conditions.

IX. Review of Project Dates

A. May 2026

1. **2026-01 - Township Line Road Development – Franklin Phoenixville, LP**
Carnevale recommended a denial unless an extension is received.
Gould seconded.

Motion passed 6-0.

- X. Review of Zoning or SALD Ordinances, Zoning Hearing Board Applications
 - A. 151 Columbia Ave. – No action taken

- XI. Committee Member Updates/Discussion
 - A. Denlinger and the commission discussed the new extension letter utilized pertaining to long-term extensions.
 - B. Sikora and Bianco discussed the need for a dedicated HARB representative, as opposed to a committee approach.

- XII. Adjournment
 - A. 9:36PM