

Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission

November 26, 2025

Avon Township Hall (16881 Queens Road, Avon 56310)

Call to Order: Chair Andrew Wensmann called to order the meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission (PC) at 7:00 PM in the Main Chamber of the Town Hall. The meeting was available via Zoom at the URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945> (PIN: AvonTown).

Pledge: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Present – Craig Blonigen, Kelly Martini, Stephen Saupe, Andrew Wensmann, and Lori Yurczyk. There was a quorum.

Approval of Agenda: Added to the agenda was an inquiry from Dan Meyer regarding a certificate of compliance. Blonigen moved to approve the agenda as amended. Martini second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes: Martini moved to approve the minutes from the October 29, 2025 meeting as presented. Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Hearings: *Winkels Variance* – At about 7:15 PM, Wensmann opened a public hearing to consider a variance for Mr. Brady Winkels, 15678 Parkwood Circle, to construct a shed 13 feet closer to the center-of-the-road (COR) than is currently permitted by Section 9.9.9.A(3) of Avon Township Land Use & Zoning Ordinance #6. Mr. Winkels said that the shed, which will be 28 x 28 feet, will be 30 feet from the edge of the road and 30 feet from the west property line. It will be a stick and frame structure that will match the existing house. He requests the variance because he said that the only logical place to put the shed is in the NW corner of the property because the S and SW areas are steeply sloped and a drainage swale runs roughly N/S through the middle of the property. Mr. Winkels said if the building were further from the road that it might cause additional drainage on his neighbor's property, which he wants to avoid. The shed will be slab on grade. Mr. Winkels said he started prepping the site about a month ago. He also said that the building was in the flattest portion of the property and that he did not fill in the ditch when doing the site preparation.

Mr. Jim McDougle, a neighbor two doors away, didn't have an issue with the variance and alerted the Town to his own property in which his house is the same distance from the COR. Another attendee said that it is necessary to have rules for development, but it is also necessary to have options.

Carl Schulzetenberg (15684 Parkwood Circle), the neighbor directly to the west of the Winkels property, was opposed to the variance. He was concerned that Mr. Winkel's had prepped the building site without first getting a permit. He was also concerned that so much fill was used that it will change the hydrology of the area and cause water to drain onto his property. Mr. Schulzetenberg requested that a hydrological study is required before a variance is granted. He also said that variances should not be granted in most circumstances. He was also concerned about the appearance of the building.

Another resident who wanted to remain anonymous, contacted the Clerk regarding the variance. The resident was concerned about the additional driveway access and the likely need for a culvert. In addition, the resident was concerned that the proposed building would be too close to the road and that a vehicle parked in front of the building would be a hazard to the snowplow or other vehicles. Another resident stated that the place Mr. Winkels wants to build the garage had been flattened by a previous owner for a trailer.

No other public comments were received. Blonigen moved to close the public hearing. Yurczyk second. All in favor. Motion carried.

The PC noted that the County will likely inspect the site prior to issuing a CSP so any drainage issues should be minimized. It was questioned whether the shed could be put on the east side of the Winkel's home. Mr. Winkels said he inquired about purchasing land from the neighbor but was unsuccessful. Yurczyk said that the Town doesn't normally approve multiple accesses on a single lot and that the Town takes variance requests very seriously. Saupe questioned if a culvert was required for an access, and whether or not a vehicle parked on the pad would be hazard as was suggested by a member of the public.

The PC considered the Findings of Fact and concluded that: (a) the proposed use is allowed in the zoning district; (b) the variance is not in harmony with the ordinance. Those that voted 'no' did so because the variance would permit a structure closer to the road than is permitted; those that voted 'yes' did so because they considered that the proposed structure would be in harmony with neighboring structures, some of which are also closer to the road than 63 feet; (c) the variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan. One PC member voted no because of safety concerns along the roadway and potential changes to the agricultural and rural nature of the Township; (d) the property would be used in a reasonable manner; (e) the variance is due to circumstances unique to the property and not created by the property owner or a previous owner. The drainage issue is unique. One PC member voted 'no' because Mr. Winkels could build a smaller garage, and that he personally requires additional storage; (f) the variance will not alter the essential character of the locality; and (g) the need for the variance involves more than economic hardship.

Blonigen moved to recommend to the Supervisors approval of a variance for Brady Winkels, 15678 Parkwood Circle, to construct a shed 13 feet closer to the COR than is currently permitted. Martini second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Winkels was again told that he will need to obtain an access permit. He will need to have this approved prior to receiving any variance. To help alleviate Mr. Schulzetenberg's concerns, Blonigen said that he expects someone from the County will examine the site and drainage prior to issuing the CSP.

Public Comments: *none.*

Business:

1. **Meyer Certificate of Deposit** – Mr. Dan Meyer is interested in splitting the homesite at 13958 325th St., St. Joseph from the remainder of the parcel (03.01137.0003). His intent was to provide access to hunting land from his parcel to the east. He was interested in what size parcels would be acceptable to the Township. He has talked to the County about the split and would do an administrative subdivision, which would require a certificate of compliance from the Town, as well as a survey. Mr. Meyer was advised that the Town would typically have no problem with a split leaving a 10-acre homesite. The PC wondered how many building credits, if any, would exist with the remaining 50-acre (or similar-sized) parcel.
2. **Moving the Supervisor's Meeting to the Second Wednesday** – At the October Supervisor's meeting it was recommended that the Township consider the possibility of moving the meeting to the second Wednesday of the month. The advantage is that it would give time for invoices to clear the bank, ensure invoices are paid on time, and that bank statements are ready for the Supervisors to examine at their meeting. Disadvantages of moving the Supervisor's meeting would be that residents are familiar with the current meeting dates and that changing the Supervisors meeting date would likely require moving the PC meeting to the first Wednesday, to allow time for publication of hearings, etc. To avoid having to pay a late fee for payment of invoices due to our meeting schedule, Blonigen recommended that the Town adopt/publicize a policy changing terms from 30 to 45 days. It was suggested this might not be necessary since most vendors already know our policy. Martini moved to recommend to the Supervisors to leave the Supervisors Meeting on the first Wednesday of the month, and to change to our payment terms to 45 days. Yurczyk second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Saupe thinks that as many invoices as possible be 'auto-paid' including payroll. Martini suggested that payment must first be authorized by the Supervisors. Also, she was concerned that there could be a change in the invoice. ACH payments could be used. One concern is that we might get charged to set up autopayments.

3. **Road Plan** – Blonigen is working on updating the road data spreadsheet. He is creating road scores to help identify roads in need of resurfacing. He should be finished soon.

Old Business/Policy Reviews/Reports/Announcements:

- Yurczyk reported that a sailboat and trailer was in the road right-of-way of 365th. It was there for about a week before it was moved. No one was familiar with this situation.
- Wensman reported that the Fire Department should be working on their annual fundraising calendar soon.

Next Meeting: The next PC meeting is December 17, 2025 at 7:00 PM (see 'Call to Order' for the Zoom log-in). This meeting had been previously rescheduled to this date to avoid New Year's Eve.

Other Meetings: Other upcoming meetings/events include (see 'Call to Order' for the Zoom log-in):

- Supervisors Meeting – December 3, 2025

Adjournment: Blonigen moved to adjourn the meeting at about 9 PM. Wensmann called the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen G. Saupe, Clerk

date: November 30, 2025

Approval:

Andrew Wensmann, *Planning Commission Chair – signature*

date: _____