

**HELLAM TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of August 8, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM by Chairman Devin Winand. The meeting was held at the Hellam Township Municipal Building. Chairman Winand led the Pledge of Allegiance. Other members present were Vice Chairman John Kokiko, Steve Fetrow, Bob Searer, Rick Cooper and Mike Shillott. Other attendees included Jason Test, Zoning Officer, and Kate Nopulos, Communications Coordinator.

Minutes Approval:

Upon a motion by Mr. Shillott and seconded by Mr. Kokiko, the minutes from the July 25, 2024 meeting were approved. Motion carried unanimously.

Communications from Citizens:

Philip and Ann Marie Torney of 6060 River Drive addressed the Planning Commission to further voice their displeasure with the short-term rental operating at 6056 River Drive and asked for a status update regarding the changes they'd like to see made to the current Short-Term Rental Ordinance since the last Planning Commission meeting. Chairman Winand explained to them the process of changing an ordinance, and how long it can take, as well as the fact that due to Sunshine Laws, the Planning Commission cannot meet as a group to discuss Township affairs outside of regularly scheduled public meetings. The Torney's submitted to the Planning Commission a document outlining ten additional points that they'd like to be considered when changes are made to the Short-Term Rental Ordinance, and stated they will continue to be concerned neighbors until changes are made. The document is attached to these minutes for review.

Zoning Officer Test asked the Torney's to form a partnership with him, to make sure all of their legitimate concerns are addressed. Mr. Fetrow advised the Torney's that the Planning Commission as a body does not have the ability to do much with the complaints they've presented, and if they want action, they're going to have to start calling the Police when the incidents are taking place, so there can be a record with law enforcement. Vice Chairman Kokiko asked the Torney's if they had contacted the rental owner/Airbnb Host, to make them aware of the issues as they occurred, to which they replied "No. If you make a complaint to the Host, they get to keep the renter's security deposit. We don't want them to make more money."

On-going Business:

Solar Ordinance Amendment

There was much discussion regarding the current draft of the Solar Ordinance, including the following: The kilowatt threshold for accessory solar energy systems was increased from 15kW to 25kW. The use table for solar energy systems was updated, removing the 20-acre divide for rural and agricultural zones, as well as a separate category for ground-mounted solar systems on vacant commercial/industrial land was added. The Planning Commission needs to further review, and potentially revise, the current solar

easement requirements. It was suggested that research be done to clarify the tax implications of solar energy systems on commercial/industrial properties, in addition to possibly increasing the liability insurance requirement for principal solar energy system owners. The language regarding impervious surface coverage for solar panels, to address water infiltration, needs to be updated, as well as allowing for township-designated representatives to conduct yearly inspections of principal solar energy systems. The Zoning Officer will provide information on the latest round of solar permit requests and their kilowatt ratings. The review of the Solar Ordinance stopped at the end of SS 490-85.1 F. Solar Easements.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jason Test", is written over a faint circular stamp. The stamp contains the text "PLANNING COMMISSION" and "TOWNSHIP OF ...".

Jason Test
Zoning Officer