HELLAM TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES OF April 23, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Devin Winand. Vice Chair John Kokiko, along with members Robert Searer, Steven Fetrow, Mike Shillott, Rick Cooper, and alternate Adrienne Johnson, were present. Township staff in attendance included Zoning Officer Jason Test.

There was no public comment.

On April 23, the Planning Commission held a work session focused on the development of an updated warehouse ordinance, with discussion centered on warehouses and distribution facilities. The Commission began by discussing sound and noise impacts associated with warehouse operations, particularly backup alarms. A threshold of 65 decibels was generally supported, and the Commission considered whether to require noise studies as part of the review process. The potential for existing buffer standards to mitigate noise impacts was also discussed.

The Commission briefly reviewed lighting considerations, and Mr. Searer indicated that he would compare the proposed lighting provisions with existing standards. A substantial portion of the meeting was devoted to air quality impacts related to warehouse uses. The Commission discussed when air quality studies should be required, what standards should be applied, and how operational characteristics—particularly truck traffic—may trigger such studies. The importance of incorporating measurable performance standards was emphasized, and reference was made to applicable federal regulations, including the Clean Air Act.

Truck-related impacts were discussed in detail, including idling and emissions. The Commission noted that federal law already regulates idling but explored additional mitigation measures, such as requiring electric hookups for trucks to reduce idling and encouraging the use of electric forklifts and similar equipment. The Commission also discussed incorporating electric vehicle infrastructure into the ordinance, including a concept that approximately 10 percent of parking spaces be EV-ready, as well as requirements for electrical connections for refrigerated trucks, with clarification that such hookups would be located externally.

Buffering requirements and the protection of sensitive receptors were also key components of the discussion. The Commission considered the use of buffer yards and the potential application of enhanced buffer strips, as well as expanding the definition of sensitive receptors to include features such as historic properties. The need to ensure that warehouse development remains compatible with the character of the Township was emphasized, including considerations related to building design, façade treatment, and overall site layout. It was noted that changes to commercial properties would continue to require land development plan approval.

The March 2026 permit report was provided for the Commission's review. There were no comments.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2026. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Test
Zoning Officer