

**Hellam Township Planning Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes - January 8, 2026**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Devin Winand, with Vice Chair John Kokiko, Robert Searer, Rick Cooper, Mike Shillott, and Steve Fetrow in attendance. Also present from the township staff were Manager Corina Mann, Zoning Officer Jason Test, and Code Compliance Field Coordinator Shane Coolbaugh. Immediately following the call to order, the Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

The first order of business was the election of the Commission Chair; Mike Shillott nominated Devin Winand for the position, which was seconded by John Kokiko and passed with unanimous approval. Following this, the Commission moved to elect a Vice-Chair. Mike Shillott nominated John Kokiko, and after a second from Robert Searer, the nomination was also approved unanimously.

**A. Public Comment:** No public comment

**B. Minutes Approval:** Mike Shillott motioned to approve the records pending the necessary revisions. This motion was seconded by John Kokiko and received unanimous approval.

**C. New Business**

a. **Z-2026-01 – 599 West Market Street – 06-01-A0, GN Realty Hallam LLC. Conditional Use and Variance**

i. *Applicant requested a continuance.*

b. **Z-026-02 – 216 Gartner Lane, KK-01-B0, UWS Properties LLC, Variance**

i. **Application Overview:** Mr. Anderson (Owner) and legal counsel requested a variance regarding the public water connection requirement for a building addition. The site is currently used by United Welding Services (UWS) for welding and light assembly work.

ii. **Utility & Cost Concerns:** The applicant's attorney noted that extending the York Water line 1,370 feet to the property would cost between \$600,000 and \$700,000. York Water has declined to fund the extension.

iii. **Operations & Fire Safety:**

1. The shop handles building projects involving stairs, hydraulic shears, saws, and welding. Mr. Anderson stated they intend to eliminate combustibles in the area to reduce fire risk.

2. Jason Test (Zoning Officer) noted that while he has nothing in writing requiring fire suppression yet, the state building code would ultimately dictate this during the land development phase.

3. Corina Mann (Township Manager) clarified that structures exceeding 5,000 sq. ft. typically trigger fire suppression requirements.

iv. **Board Discussion:** John Kokiko expressed a conflict between wanting to keep high-skilled jobs in the township and the fear of fire risks without adequate suppression.

1. Mike Shillot questioned the rationale for sewer connection; Jason Brennaman (Engineer) explained the addition leaves no room for a septic structure.

2. The attorney suggested a "reasonable condition stipulation" to resolve the uncertainty regarding state codes.

v. **Public Comment:** Stephanie (Resident) inquired about future hook-up mandates. Corina confirmed that if water comes within a specific distance (e.g., 70 feet) in the future, connection is mandatory.

vi. **Final Motion:** Steve Fetrow motioned to recommend approval with two stipulations:

1. If public water becomes available in the future, the applicant must connect.
  2. The building process must confirm that state codes do not require fire suppression; if suppression is deemed necessary, the variance is void.
- vii. **Action:** Motioned by Steve Fetrow, seconded by John Kokiko. Motion carried (Rick Cooper and Mike Shillott opposed).

#### D. Old Business

##### a. Data Centers

- i. **Draft Introduction:** The first draft of the Data Center Ordinance was introduced, featuring a text-based spreadsheet framework built from comparative research of West Manchester, Peach Bottom, and other neighboring municipalities.
- ii. **Zoning & Location Review:** The Commission reviewed potential locations within the proposed overlay, specifically referencing Poe Lane and Keeney Lane. It was clarified that the local golf course is zoned MU2 and would not be included in the MU1 overlay. A discussion occurred regarding the limited number of small areas where these facilities would be permitted due to strict setback requirements.
- iii. **Parcel Size & Calculation:** The Commission reviewed proposed acreage requirements based on building size to ensure lots can support necessary infrastructure and setbacks.
  1. MU1 Zone: 2.5 acres required per every 10,000 sq. ft. for buildings under 25,000 sq. ft and 3 acres per 10,000 square feet for buildings 25,000 to 50,000 square feet.
  2. KCI, I, C/I: 2.5 acres required per every 10,000 sq. ft. for buildings 49,999 square feet or smaller. 3 acres per 10,000 square feet for building 150,000 to 500,000 square feet.
  3. Standardization: Calculations will be based on building footprint. Staff was directed to clarify these as "minimum" parcel sizes and corrected the draft breakpoints from 200,000 sq. ft. to 150,000 sq. ft.
- iv. **Setback Requirements:**
  1. Residential Adjacency: Buildings adjoining R or RA zones require a 250-foot setback in MU1 and a 350-foot setback in all other zones.
  2. Other Zones: Setbacks for properties adjoining non-residential zones (I, CI, and Quarry) are set at 100–150 feet. MU2 and KCI setback is 100 feet.
  3. Power & Cooling Infrastructure: Backup generators and cooling systems were grouped into a single category requiring maximum setbacks (250–350 feet) due to continuous noise concerns.
  4. Accessory Structures: General accessory buildings are set at 100 feet; staff will draft an exemption for "guard shacks" to allow placement near entrances.
- v. **Buffering & Visual Screening:** The Commission discussed "Buffer E," intended to create a "solid wall" effect using a 50-foot-wide area featuring a berm, fencing, and trees. The Commission reviewed current height requirements for trees and noted that these buffers are critical for hiding facilities from road-level view.
- vi. **Building Height:**

1. The Commission compared local standards (35 feet) against West Manchester (up to 110 feet with setbacks) and Springettsbury (100 feet).
2. The Commission opted for a more restrictive approach to preserve township character.
3. **Final Decision:** Maximum height set at 40 feet for MU1 and 60 feet for all other zones.

**E. Ongoing Business for Future Meetings**

- a. EAC Burn Ordinance will be on the next meeting's agenda under ongoing business for future business

**F. Reports:** No reports

**G. Upcoming Meetings:** Next Planning Commission Meeting – January 22, 2026

**H. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Test  
Zoning Officer