

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

January 5, 2026

The regular meeting and public hearing of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with law, was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, January 5, 2026, at the Township of Upper St. Clair Municipal Building, Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, Upper St. Clair, PA. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

PRESENT: Commissioner Burlingame
Commissioner Graves
Commissioner Herrod
Commissioner Madden
Commissioner Pardini
Commissioner Plutko
Commissioner Thomas

Matthew R. Serakowski	Township Manager
Mark S. Mansfield	Assistant Township Manager
Kristen L. Burch	Director of Finance
Adam A. Benigni	Director of Community Development
Irving S. Firman	Township Attorney
Craig Jubie	Township Engineer
Lance Hannaford	Network Deposition Services
Prudence Cooper	Recording Secretary

EXCUSED: None

PUBLIC: Approximately 28 people attended.

At 7:00 PM, the Honorable D. Michael Fisher conducted a ceremony in which newly elected Commissioners Wayne W. Herrod and Timothy F. Madden, and re-elected Commissioner Todd D. Burlingame were sworn into office as Commissioners of the Township of Upper St. Clair.

BIENNIAL REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

At 7:30 PM, Mr. Serakowski called the Biennial Reorganization Meeting to order and stated that the outline of this process was included in the Board members' agenda packets.

Mr. Serakowski then asked for nominations for President of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Pardini made the motion to nominate Commissioner Burlingame for the office of President of the Board. This was seconded by Commissioner Graves.

Mr. Serakowski asked if there were any other nominations for President of the Board and there were none.

MOTION AND VOTE TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Pardini moved to close the nominations for President of the Board of Commissioners. This was seconded by Commissioner Graves and carried with a 7-0 voice vote.

MOTION AND VOTE TO ELECT COMMISSIONER BURLINGAME AS PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Graves moved to elect Commissioner Burlingame as President of the Board of Commissioners. This was seconded by Commissioner Madden and carried with a 7-0 voice vote.

Commissioner Burlingame asked for nominations for Vice President of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Madden nominated Commissioner Graves for the office of Vice President of the Board.

MOTION AND VOTE TO ELECT COMMISSIONER GRAVES AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Madden moved to elect Commissioner Graves as Vice President of the Board of Commissioners. This was seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried with a 7-0 voice vote.

At this time, Commissioner Burlingame called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order.

REVIEW OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2025

Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 1, 2025. This was seconded by Commissioner Pardini and carried with a 7-0 voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Ann Gentry, 2315 Old Washington Road, extended her congratulations to the new Commissioners. Ms. Gentry wished to voice two concerns, the first regarding the planned development of the paddle courts at St. Clair Country Club that were approved by the Board in June, 2025 with the restrictions on lights and hours of operation. The courts opened for play in October and there is still an issue with the lights that turn off at 10:00PM as was required, but other lights are on from dusk until dawn, which is unacceptable. Ms. Gentry is asking the Board to put a stop to this nuisance and stop the glare in her neighborhood.

Ms. Gentry's second concern pertains to the road that started construction in July in the parking lot linking the existing lot on Old Washington Road to the site of the new paddle courts. This road and parking lot are not in the plans approved by the Board in June. When Ms. Gentry inquired with the Township, she was told these were temporary, were for construction use only, and would be removed upon completion of the project. The construction was completed in October, but the road and parking lot remain. Ms. Gentry then asked the Board to address the removal of this unapproved construction.

Both Commissioners Thomas and Madden stated for the record their recusal from discussion and all matters pertaining to St. Clair Country Club because they are members of the Club.

In response to Ms. Gentry's concerns, Commissioner Burlingame stated that Mr. Benigni will review the lighting and how it relates to the agreement this week and will confirm whether the construction road is temporary or not. Commissioner Burlingame then thanked Ms. Gentry for her comments.

Mr. Bill Dawson, 1220 Fox Run Circle, welcomed the new Commissioners. He further stated that in the last 25 years, there have been two 100-year floods and the property that the Township will own from Lesnett Road to Route 19 is in a flood zone. The Township has a very good 10-year Comprehensive Plan with its vision of attaching trails in Baker Park to the Montour Trail.

Mr. Dawson then asked the Board to consider videotaping meetings and allowing taxpayers to attend Board meetings via the internet which surrounding municipalities have been doing for a while.

Commissioner Burlingame thanked Mr. Dawson for his comments.

Commissioner Burlingame asked the public if there were any additional comments pertaining to items not on the agenda and there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

RECOMMENDATION RE. ESTABLISH PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-0004 - ST. CLAIR COUNTRY CLUB PADDLE HUT - UNIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL

Mr. Benigni stated that this is an application for Unified Conditional Use/Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval to construct a new paddle hut at the St. Clair Country Club, located at 2300 Old Washington Road. It was reviewed by the Planning Commission on December 18, 2025, and was recommended for approval subject to certain conditions.

A public hearing is required for Conditional Use applications. Staff recommends that the public hearing be scheduled for Monday, February 2, 2026 which may be accomplished by a simple motion and voice vote.

Mr. John Gentry, 2315 Old Washington Road, asked the Board if there is a minimum time requirement for the next Board of Commissioners meeting. Mr. Firman confirmed that the requirement is 30 days until the next public hearing. Mr. Benigni added that the required time frame has been met and up to this point, the required notice of this matter has been fulfilled. If the Board schedules the additional public hearing tonight, further notices will be sent.

In response to Mr. Gentry's inquiry, Mr. Benigni explained the public notice requirement stating that once the public hearing has been set, certified letters will be sent to all residents living within 200 feet of the subject property, which in this case, will be many.

Commissioner Burlingame asked if there were any additional questions from the Board or the public and there were none.

MOTION AND VOTE TO ESTABLISH PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-0004 - ST. CLAIR COUNTRY CLUB PADDLE HUT - UNIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL

Commissioner Plutko moved to Establish Public Hearing Re. PLC25-0004 - St. Clair Country Club Paddle Hut - Unified Conditional Use Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval to February 2, 2026. This was seconded by Commissioner Graves and carried with a 5-0-2 voice vote. Commissioners Thomas and Madden recused themselves from voting.

PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-1302 - RECLASSIFICATION OF THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK/LOT 321-G-150 TO THE R-4 LOW RISE MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT AND RM RESTRICTED LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT BY ZONING AMENDMENT TO THE TOWNSHIP ZONING MAP

Commissioner Burlingame stated that this is the public hearing on an application filed by Northwest Land LLC #1023 to reclassify the property located at 1512 McLaughlin Run Road (Block/Lot 321-G-150) to its previous zoning designations of R-4 Low-Rise Multifamily Residential District and RM Restricted Light Industrial District.

Mr. Benigni reviewed the recommended public hearing procedures.

Those wishing to testify were sworn in by Mr. Hannaford.

Mr. Benigni then entered Township Exhibits #1 through #27, Applicant Exhibits #1 and #2, Citizens Exhibit #1, and County Exhibit #1 into the record.

Mr. Benigni continued that this is a zoning reclassification of property identified as block and lot 321-G-150 located at 1512 McLaughlin Run Road that was approved several years ago as Tuscany Pointe Planned Development, an apartment project still owned by Jeff Thomas. Since then, the Planned Residential Development (PRD) approval lapsed after five years because no improvements were constructed. The Municipal Planning Code (MPC) requires that this zoning district be reclassified or rezoned back to what it was prior to the Tuscany Pointe PRD approval which is RM Restricted Light Industrial District that touches McLaughlin Run Road and R-4 Low-Rise Industrial District. Mr. Benigni indicated that the agent for the applicant is present this evening, who did not wish to provide any comment at this time, but will respond to comments, if necessary.

Mr. Jeffrey Wilhelm, an attorney who litigates land development with Reed Smith, representing Dimitri and Ann Shiry, 1309 Wellington Court, raised a legal procedure pertaining to this zoning amendment that was filed by the applicant. This amendment must go under Article 7, pursuant to Article 6. Article 6 indicates that this is a curative amendment proposed by the applicant which has rules, specifically that under §10908., which relates to hearings. The applicant has a duty and obligation to present evidence to satisfy five conditions expressed in the MPC. Then, his client after the case in-chief, can come in and provide a presentation which they will do on February 2, 2026.

Mr. Firman thanked Mr. Wilhelm for his comments and responded to them by stating that this is a reclassification of property as described by Mr. Benigni which does not require testimony from the applicant who is the property owner; however, they are certainly welcome to speak if they wish. This public hearing was scheduled at a prior Board meeting. Any prior testimony made by Staff has

already been put into the record and if there are any members of the public or the applicant who wish to speak, they certainly can. The hearing will be continued, and Mr. Wilhelm will have an opportunity to speak at this meeting or the next meeting.

Commissioner Burlingame then asked if any members of the public wished to speak at this time.

Mr. William Elliott, 2602 Siesta Drive, Vice President of Mosebach Manufacturing, located on McLaughlin Run Road, across from property, stated that for the past 27 years, he has observed the creek across the street which has had flooding issues over the years. On April 24, 2025, the police required the second shift employees of his company to evacuate due to flooding both upstream and downstream out of fear that they would not be able to be rescued easily. Any rezoning will add to water downstream triggering just enough flooding to cause safety issues for his employees and the building. There is an additional concern of the water runoff from the old Bedner Farm development above Mosebach's building which is not serious; however, the creek overflowing the road would be difficult to deal with.

Mr. Tom Meiman, 1409 Deepwood Drive, thanked the Board for an opportunity to be heard on this matter. Mr. Meiman asked the Board to not approve this rezoning as proposed due to its impact of the development density on existing infrastructure in the Township and surrounding area. His specific concern is with sewer and stormwater management and its ability to support development that may occur with this rezoning classification which could facilitate development to a degree that would exceed the capacity of the systems. If the rezoning is in response to a specific development plan, he asks that the Board take into account the capacity of the system when considering the development and that the developer be responsible for the cost of any problems due to the expansion. Mr. Meiman suggests that this property be rezoned R-1 until such time that a viable development plan has been submitted. Any such proposal should meet all Township requirements and then be presented for possible rezoning reclassification at that time.

Ms. Teresa Rowles, 1417 Deepwood Drive, has appeared before the Planning Commission many times expressing her objection to the rezoning of this property to R-4 Zoning District since the proposed townhouse complex would be in her backyard. Ms. Rowles has received over 100 residents' signatures on a petition protesting rezoning the property as R-4 which she is hopeful has been seen by the Board. The October 2025 meeting of the Planning Commission ended with them not recommending the rezoning to R-4. Then at the meeting on December 18, 2026, the Planning Commission gave their final recommendation in favor of rezoning the property to R-4. When asked to explain why they changed their recommendation, the Planning Commission responded that they are not required to do so. If the Board approves this high-density complex, it will change the makeup of the neighborhood with increased traffic and emissions from over 150 vehicles, in addition to an increase in noise coming from a pool, clubhouse and pickleball courts all of which will impact property values. Ms. Rowles concluded her comments by stating that this potential development is not a good fit for the neighborhood and urges the Board to consider rezoning this property to low density R-1.

Mr. Tom Siroka, a 50+ year resident of the Township, currently living in Windgate, originally bought his home in the Township because he liked its park-like setting, great schools, police force, and services, including snow removal. The population in the community has been strong. Mr. Siroka's research has indicated that this potential development of 100+ townhomes will have a very low impact on tax revenue for the Township. There is more growth with single family homes, therefore, high density town homes are not needed and will not add significant value to the community, but only lowers the value of existing properties.

Mr. Siroka further stated that this development will add about 150 cars each evening on Lesnett Road. Furthermore, the only reason for the development of the high-density properties is to cover the cost of building a bridge over the creek at \$1 million. The developer cannot afford to put Deepwood- type properties there. Mr. Siroka's property abuts the back of the property which will be filled with townhomes that will resemble the ones built down Lesnett Road to the left of Bank Street close to Bridgeville. If that is not what the Board wants, Mr. Siroka urges the Board not to approve the rezoning of this property because it will change what the Township is all about, it will not add value to existing properties, and it will not increase the tax base.

Mr. Mark Snyder, 1429 Deepwood Drive, reiterated points that have been raised this evening. The success of the Township is due to single family homes. The Laurel property is a monolith that has no architectural or landscape consideration that aesthetically does not blend into the environment. From his property, he can almost see down to McLaughlin Run Road when there are no leaves on the trees. Any development of two to three story properties will be in his backyard. Mr. Snyder then asked for further explanation regarding the law that states this property must revert back to its previous zoning.

In response, Mr. Firman stated that per the MPC, when a PRD is abandoned, it must be reclassified back to its original state. That is the only issue before the Board this evening. Mr. Snyder believes it was a legal paradigm that caused the Planning Commission to change its mind on its recommendation to the Board. He wanted to know if there was any backdoor discussion with the Planning Commission as to why the Planning Commission changed their vote from a 2-5 vote not recommending approval for this rezoning to a 5-2 vote recommending approval. He feels the residents are owed an answer as to the reason for this vote change, even though the attorney representing the Planning Commission told them not to respond.

Mr. Snyder shared that empathy was received from the Planning Commission regarding the potential paddleball court that may be built on the property, but they received no empathy regarding the proposed two to three story townhomes which is discerning. Furthermore, the slope behind the houses above the property is 50 to 60 degrees and the environmental requirement is 45 degrees which should be considered in the development. The development of the townhomes, pickleball courts, pool, etc., will diminish the slope creating an inability to absorb water and cause flooding. The Board should be concerned about its downstream partners in Bridgeville who also have its flooding issues. The Board's decision should not be about money, but about the merits of the project and whether it benefits the Township and its citizens, not the developer. Since time ran out and the developer did nothing to the property, Mr. Snyder proposes that the developer donate the property through a land trust and give it to the Township for the benefit of a tax write-off.

Commissioner Burlingame asked if there were additional comments from the public and there were none. He added that he appreciated the public's feedback, but emphasized that the public hearing is to rezone the property to what it was prior to PRD approval; it is not for the development of the property. That will be addressed if and when application is made in this regard and the public will be invited back at that time.

Mr. Benigni stated that it is recommended that the Board of Commissioners continue this public hearing to Monday, February 2, 2026 for the purpose of taking Staff testimony.

Commissioner Burlingame asked if there were any additional questions from the Board or the public and there were none.

MOTION AND VOTE TO CONTINUE PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-1302 - RECLASSIFICATION OF THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK/LOT 321-G-150 TO THE R-4 LOW-RISE MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT AND RM RESTRICTED LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT BY ZONING AMENDMENT TO THE TOWNSHIP ZONING MAP

Commissioner Graves moved to continue Public Hearing Re. PLC25-1302 Reclassification of the Property Identified as Block/Lot 321-G-150 to the R-4 Low-Rise Multifamily residential District and RM Restricted Light Industrial Zoning District by Zoning Amendment to the Township Zoning Map to Monday, February 2, 2026. This was seconded by Commissioner Madden and carried with a 6-1 voice vote. Commissioner Pluko cast the negative vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Burlingame announced that the Board will adjourn this evening to executive session to discuss legal and personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion for adjournment by Commissioner Pardini and a second by Commissioner Plutko which carried with a 7-0 voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15PM.

Prudence Cooper
Recording Secretary
January 5, 2026