

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with the law, was called to order by the Chairman at 7:30 PM, Thursday, November 20, 2025, in the Township Municipal Building Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, located at 1820 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, PA 15241.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Krantz
Adam McGurk
Robin Weissert
David Sirota
David Wade
Adam Benigni, Director of Planning and Community Development
Chris Cahillane, on behalf of the Township Attorney
Callie Munch, Community Development Administrative Assistant

ABSENT: Yvonne Piecknick, Jake Polochak

PUBLIC: Approximately 13 residents

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE INFORMATIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF OCTOBER 16, 2025.

On motion by Ms. Weissert, seconded by Mr. Wade, carried by a voice vote, 5 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent, the approval of the minutes from October 16, 2025 were approved with revisions.

OLD BUSINESS

PLC25-1303 – ZONING MAP AMENDMENT FOR REZONING OF PROPERTIES IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK/LOT 254-P-005 AND 321-C-155, LOCATED AT 1400 MCLAUGHLIN RUN ROAD FROM R-LI, LOW INTENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO R-4, LOW-RISE MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.

Leslie Peters, Bowles-Rice, representative for the applicant introduced herself to the Planning Commission and gave a summary of the application, explaining that the applicant would like to rezone the 15-acre property on McLaughlin Run Road to allow for townhouses. She added that the 2025 Comprehensive Plan mentions the need for housing other than single-family homes and it would be a good opportunity for young professionals and older residents who would like to downsize.

Dmitri Shiry, 1309 Wellington Drive, stated that he had spoke at the October meeting in regard to the rezoning of the Dawson property from an R-LI to an R4 zoning district. He continued that Mr. Lucci, representative for the applicant, had not yet submitted a preliminary plan to the Township for a review of

the project and, to the best of his knowledge, still had not submitted any plans with requested modifications by the November 6th deadline. He added that Mr. McGurk had stated at the previous meeting that the plan would not be a good fit for the property and that it was too dense for the available land and the meeting ended with the matter being tabled until more information could be obtained but as it stands today, no additional information has been submitted to the Township for their consideration. Mr. Shiry inquired why the property needed to be changed from an R-LI to an R4 zoning district other than for the applicant's economic gain. He then quoted a conversation between Mr. Krantz and Mr. Lucci at the previous meeting stating that Mr. Lucci would not see a point to reclassify the property to an R4 zoning district if the Thomas property is not approved, adding that the Planning Commission had already made an unfavorable recommendation to the board to reclassify the Thomas property to an R4 zoning district. Mr. Shiry stated that it was his understanding that the Dawson property had once been zoned conservation land to maintain green space and mitigate potential flooding, landslides and subsidence but as it is currently zoned (R-LI), it provides more optionality for its usage and rezoning it to an R4 zoning district is to maximize profits. He then concluded by stating his concerns regarding the open-source mine shaft located in the basement of the house located on the Dawson property.

Thomas Soroka, 1441 Deepwood Drive, explained that he has lived in Upper St. Clair for over 50 years, stating that initially he moved into the Township to put his kids into the Upper St. Clair school district. He then complimented amenities and services such as the ballparks, recreation center, police department, fire department and the maintenance work done by public works. Mr. Soroka added that the community is known for having homes set on a nice amount of property and believes that the only reason the developer wants to build multi-family homes instead of single-family homes, like what is currently found in the area, is due to the million-dollar investment of building a bridge across the creek to the property. He then referenced the two and three-story townhouses found on Mayview Road (Laurel Place) to describe what high-density housing looks like, adding this project on McLaughlin Run Road would be at an even higher scale. Mr. Soroka concluded by stating that he believes there would not be much interest in high-density housing developments from people looking to move into the township.

Theresa Rowles, 1417 Deepwood Drive, stated that she believes that rezoning the Dawson property from a low-density zoning district to a high density would have a detrimental impact to the community by allowing possibly an additional 50+ townhouses to the project, if the developer's application for the Thomas property is approved. She commented that a large influx of new residents would increase noise from traffic and general neighborhood activity, even more so when there is a pool, clubhouse and pickleball court on the property. Ms. Rowles stated that she is deeply concerned about the impact that a high-density townhouse complex would have on her property value as her home sits directly above the

proposed project, adding that the view of the townhouse rooftops, added noise and vehicle emissions would make selling her property difficult in the future.

Mr. McGurk then asked Mr. Lucci, Victor Wetzel Associates, what the justification was for requesting both Dawson property parcels be rezoned (the large parcel in question and the small parcel that already contains a single-family residence). Leslie Peters replied that it was included as to not have an issue with spot zoning, which would be a small parcel of land zoned R-LI surrounded by a R4 zoning district, if the reclassification of both properties were to move forward. Mr. McGurk stated that there is a sliver of property adjacent to the smaller Dawson parcel that is currently zoned R-LI and asked if this parcel was included to aid the density calculation for the project. Mr. Lucci explained that the proposal is 39 units on 14.7 acres of land which calculates to a density of 2.6, in the R4 zoning district you can go up to 10 units per acre. He then stated that the Dawson property has a power line that crosses through it, McLaughlin Run that runs parallel to the property and there is steep topography that limits the available property.

Discussion was then held between Mr. McGurk and Mr. Lucci regarding whether there was a need to rezone the smaller Dawson parcel and it was established that the property was included in the applicant's acquisition of the property and is not included in the townhouse project.

Mr. Sirota then stated that although the 2025-2035 Comprehensive Plan states that the Township would like to see townhouses in the area, it does not mean that every piece of land should have a townhouse on it. He added that the property is unique in its configuration and asked if it could be developed without asking for a lot of modifications to the code. Mr. Lucci replied that with the small area that they are developing they would need some modifications, for example the setback requirements, but that they are currently looking to just rezone the property at this time. Mr. Sirota reiterated that it is incumbent on the applicant to justify why it needs to be rezoned. Discussion was held on the modifications needed for the development and what the possibilities for the property would be like if the rezoning were to move forward and the townhouse development project were to fall through.

Justine Cimarolli, 632 Bank Street (Bridgeville), asked that Bridgeville be considered in the Planning Commission's decision, adding that Bridgeville did receive a \$500,000 grant to start working on part of the McLaughlin Run Creek issue and this type of development would be detrimental to their flooding issues.

MOTION: THAT the Planning Commission deny PLC25-1303 – Zoning Map Amendment for rezoning of properties identified as Block/Lot 254-P-005 and 321-C-155, located at 1400 McLaughlin Run Road from R-LI, Low Intensity Residential District to R-4 Low-Rise Multifamily Residential District.

Motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Mr. McGurk, carried by voice vote, 4 Yes, 1 No, 2 Absent. Motion Carries.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the meeting be adjourned at approximately 7:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Callie Munch

Community Development Administrative Assistant