PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026 7:00 P.M.
THE MEETING WAS STREAMED ON YOUTUBE LIVE

I. GENERAL FUNCTIONS

a. Call to Order: Larry O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

b. Roll Call:

Larry O'Donnell, Chair
Robert Lepley, Vice Chair – absent with prior notification
Maria Diaz-Joves, Secretary
Don Werkheiser, Member
Joseph Ingaglio, Member
Monica Mindler, Member
Michael Corriere, Solicitor
Bryan Smith, Barry Issett & Associates
Terri Fadem, Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer

c. Minutes of Previous meeting:

Motion by Maria Diaz-Joves to approve the meeting minutes of August 11, 2026. Seconded by Don Werkheiser. **Motion carried 5:0:0.**

II. REVIEW & DELIBERATION

630 Linden Avenue: Christopher DiPippa, general contractor for the applicants, appeared before the Commission. Mr. DiPippa stated that the property is being developed as a private memorial honoring two of the Kaufman family's daughters who died in a 2021 fire at the property.

The applicants propose to preserve the property as a private family memorial garden and that the property is intended to be held in a trust to provide for long-term stewardship and maintenance of the memorial garden. The proposed improvements include a decorative memorial fountain, open trellis/pergola, private family walking paths, fenced yard, ornamental landscaping, seating areas, and related site improvements.

Mr. Pippo reviewed several items identified during the site plan review, including the proposed use, the approximately 11-foot height of the pergola, preservation of natural features, landscaping, and parking. The landscaping will incorporate existing natural features and trees where practical, along with gardens intended to provide additional buffering from neighboring properties.

The Commission discussed the existing garage and driveway, noting that the property currently provides parking associated with the garage. Because the proposed use is intended for private family use, the Commission determined that no public parking issue is anticipated.

The Commission also discussed the existing privacy fencing and proposed wrought-iron fencing. The proposed fountain will be seasonal and will be drained at the end of the season, with the fountain's mechanical equipment stored in the existing garage.

Motion by Monica Mindler to recommend approval of the site plan for 630 Linden Avenue as presented, subject to applicable Borough requirements and approvals. Seconded by Maria Diaz-Joves. **Motion carried 5:0:0.**

Motion by Joseph Ingaglio to make a recommendation that Borough Council consider waiving or reducing applicable permit and inspection fees associated with the memorial project, to the extent legally permissible. Seconded by Maria Diaz-Joves. **Motion passed 5:0:0.**

III. OLD BUSINESS

Planning Commission Vacancy: Tina Olson appeared before the Commission and introduced herself as a prospective Planning Commission member. Ms. Olson stated that she has lived in Hellertown for approximately 21 years and has raised four children in the Borough. She discussed her prior involvement in community-oriented activities and explained that she had observed several Planning Commission meetings before deciding that she could make the necessary commitment to serve.

Motion by Don Werkheiser to recommend that Borough Council appoint Tina Olson to fill the Planning Commission vacancy. Seconded by Monica Mindler. **Motion carried 5:0:0.**

The Commission noted that the prospective appointment would fill the current vacancy, with the term expected to run through December 2028, subject to Borough Council's action.

Chairperson Larry O'Donnell advised the Commission that, although he intends to remain on the Planning Commission, he anticipates stepping down from the Chairperson position within the next month or two. A future reorganization meeting would be held at which time a new Chairperson would be elected.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Maria Diaz - Joves to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m. Seconded by Joseph Ingaglio. **Motion carried 5:0:0.**

Respectfully submitted by
Terri Fadem
Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer