

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hilltown Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Jon Apple at 7:00 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Also present were Planning Commission members: Dave Bartholomew, Eric Nogami, Carol Pierce, along with Township Engineer Timothy Fulmer. Robert Sichelstiel was absent.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – action on the minutes of the August 18, 2025, meeting: Motion was made by Ms. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Nogami, and carried unanimously to approve the August 18, 2025, meeting minutes as written. There was no public comment.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: None.
3. CONFIRMED APPOINTMENTS:

- a) Philadelphia Glider Land Development Waiver: Ben Barlan, Holmes Cunningham Engineering, and Charles Norman, Philadelphia Glider Council, were both present to request a waiver of land development to construct a new hanger building to replace an old hanger building. Ben Barlan advised the new construction is 7,515sq ft and would be erected to replace the old smaller hanger which is in disrepair. Mr. Barlan noted the building would have no plumbing or other utilities and only utilized to store gliders. Mr. Barlan stated they received and reviewed the letter from Wynn Associates dated September 3, 2025 and would comply with all items.

Chairman Jon Apple asked Mr. Barlan to go over the specific items addressed in the Wynn Associates Letter. Mr. Barlan then advised how they would comply with each item. Discussion further ensued between Mr. Barlan and the Commission. Mr. Apple then opened the floor to public comment; there was none.

A motion by Mr. Nogami, seconded by Ms. Pierce and unanimously carried out to recommend approval of the land waiver development subject to the September 3, 2025 letter from Wynn Associates for the Philadelphia Glider Council.

- b) Robert L. Johnson Minor Subdivision: Kirk Clauss, Schlosser & Clauss Consulting Engineers, was present to discuss the letter from Wynn Associates dated August 29, 2025. Mr. Clauss reminded the Commission of the waiver requests that were discussed last fall as part of the sketch plan review, and noted that everything requested was followed through for the configurations of the lot. Mr. Clauss noted that since there will be disturbance, they will be applying for erosion and sediment approval from Bucks County Conservation District. Mr. Clauss stated the new lot would be tied into public water and sewer and they are awaiting comments on the Hilltown Township Water Authority engineer for his review noting this will be a simple lateral connection tied into Schultz Road. Mr. Clauss stated they would not be proposing sidewalks as they were previously waived with a fee in lieu of that has already been provided to the Township. Discussion ensued between Ms. Pierce and Mr. Clauss regarding the sidewalks and a bridge. Chairman Jon Apple then opened the floor to public comment; there was none.

Township Engineer Timothy Fulmer wanted to clarify with the Commission that they would be voting on the preliminary and the final recommendations and the approval of items 2(A) and 2(B) which was heard last fall by the commission.

A motion by Mr. Bartholomew, seconded by Ms. Pierce, and carried unanimously to approve the recommendations noted in the August 29, 2015 letter from Wynn Associates and approval of items 2(A) and 2(B) within that letter.

- c) Rosenthal Tract Subdivision: Rich Carroll III of Hallmark Homes, along with David Horner, Horner & Canter Associates, and Ben Barlan, Holmes Cunningham Engineering, were present to discuss the letter from Wynn Associates dated September 5, 2025 and the Heinrich & Klein letter dated June 13, 2025. Mr. Carroll proceeded to pass out a letter to the Commission dated September 15, 2025 from Holmes Cunningham Engineering requesting twelve waivers from the Township Ordinances, which was not received by the Commission or Professionals prior to this meeting.

Mr. Carroll discussed items eleven and twelve in the waiver letter. Mr. Fulmer then noted that numbers four, six and eight on the letter that was just received appear to be new waiver requests. Mr. Carroll discussed item four regarding a partial waiver from providing road widening on the northern frontage due to it being a low-density area. Mr. Carroll then discussed item six requesting a partial waiver from providing curb along the full property frontage. Mr. Carroll noted that the stormwater runs down Swartley Road to Route 309 into an existing drainage facility. Discussion ensued between the Commission and Mr. Carroll about the curbing and collection of water in the stormwater swale. Ms. Pierce asked what type of guarantee would this plan have and noted that while she was on the Bucks County Planning Commission, she had numerous discussions with former Township Manager Lorraine Leslie regarding the excessive rainwater that comes from Swartley Road and quoted Ms. Leslie saying '3" – 6" of rainwater would pool creating a traffic hazard which would tie up police and fire attempting to work through the traffic'. Mr. Carroll replied noting that the guarantee is based off of the Township Engineer as well as the project engineer doing the calculations to prove everything mathematically to reduce runoff at certain stages of all storms. Mr. Carroll also noted the final guarantee follows with the performance escrow and maintenance bond; with everything covering approximately five years. Mr. Carroll mentioned that the stormwater management now is very different then it was years ago.

Chairman Jon Apple asked Mr. Carroll to address the letter from the Bucks County Planning Commission, specifically items 1(a) and 1(b) regarding Belgian block curb. Mr. Carroll noted it was a fairly benign waiver and asked if he should discuss section 1(a) Section 140.37.D next. Mr. Apple confirmed. Mr. Carroll stated on the plan there are parking stalls with landscape islands but that they are not able to place shade trees there. Mr. Apple inquired as to why trees could not be planted. Mr. Carroll noted it was due to the building being in the area. Mr. Apple suggested that Mr. Carroll can move the building because it is not built yet. Mr. Carroll noted they do not want the building placed so far back that it is closer to the homes. Mr. Apple stated the building would not be and that Mr. Carroll did not provide enough room for trees to be in which was his design and his choice to present. Discussion then ensued between the Commission and Mr. Carroll on items 1(a) Section 140-37D and 3(a). Mr. Fulmer recapped the road widening as proposed on the plan. Mr. Carroll indicated that the only relief for cartway widening that the applicant is requesting pertains to the section of Swartley Road between the intersection for the single family homes and the northernmost property line of the site. Ms. Pierce then mentioned she did a site visit prior to the meeting and asked if the widening of the road would end at the first house on the left at Rt 309. Mr. Carroll acknowledged that was the location to

which Ms. Pierce mentioned that was the home where a murder had occurred and she now knows the location.

Further discussion ensued regarding item 3(b) between Mr. Carroll and the Commission. Ms. Pierce commented about her concerns with the road, noting statistics of the amount of volunteer firefighters statewide in 2020 as well as in Bucks County, including the age of the firefighters and stressed her concerns for fire coverage, the seniors as well as the bridge and angle for the fire companies to navigate their apparatus and asked Mr. Carroll how they will address these concerns since they are not widening the bridge or considering doing anything to the bridge. Mr. Carroll noted that they are working with the Fire Marshall to create a truck turn template for the community and noted it will be submitted for review as well as noting that both the PC1 and RR sections of Swartley Road will meet all necessary requirements. Mr. Carroll also noted the bridge is an off-site item that they have no control over. Ms. Pierce then stated the reason why she complimented the bridge of the prior applicant was because it covers the same span of water. Ms. Pierce then stated that on June 10, 2025, she met with a Township Supervisor as she knew this application would be coming up prior to the end of the year and asked for the traffic statistics for the last five years regarding the number and severity of motor vehicle accidents and fatalities at Swartley Road and Hilltown Pike as well as at Rt 309 and the bridge noting these are very important to consider as pulling out of Swartley Road is exceptionally difficult due to the slope of Hilltown Pike and drivers speeding towards Rt 309. Ms. Pierce then mentioned how seniors like to go to upscale restaurants and enjoy cultural events, noting most are in Doylestown, and asked Mr. Carroll how he expected people to get off of Swartley Road to go to Doylestown. Mr. Carroll noted that the traffic portion will consume a lot of time, and asked the Commission if they had any other questions pertaining to items that were not traffic related. Discussion then ensued between the Commission and Mr. Carroll about buffers, sidewalks, and open space.

Mr. Carroll then introduced Dave Horner, traffic engineer, to address the Commissions concerns and questions as well as address the Heinrich & Klein letter dated September 10, 2025. Mr. Horner mentioned the April 28, 2025 letter which was reviewed in June of 2025 and a supplemental review was completed to address comments on August 22, 2025 with the primary focus on the traffic impact level of service per the Township ordinance. Mr. Horner noted that at peak hours at Swartley Road and Rt 309 there are existing deficiencies that fall under 'Level E', which is a delay of 40-60 seconds for left hand turns. Mr. Horner mentioned that the additional traffic will increase this to a 'Level F' and noted a left-hand turn restriction would address this concern. Mr. Horner then stated the resulting level of service at Hilltown Pike and Swartley Road was acceptable and requires no mitigation.

Mr. Horner noted that the level of service evaluation varies between a delay signal versus a non-signalized intersection, and that for a non-signal a delay of thirty-five seconds or less is acceptable by PennDOT, County, and the Township at a 'Level D'. Mr. Horner stated the Hilltown Pike intersection is currently a 'Level C' which is below twenty-five seconds and will remain that post development. Mr. Carroll recommended a left turn restriction and noted that was a discussion for PennDOT and the Township. Mr. Horner then answered the question regarding crash data noting it was a requirement and provided in the supplemented report and was satisfied. Ms. Pierce inquired if there were statistics included for School Buses as they are building eleven single family dwellings and asked how many bedrooms per home. Mr. Carroll noted each single-family home would have four plus bedrooms. Ms. Pierce then stated there could be up to four children per home. Ms. Pierce then spoke of her concerns with a school bus navigating those roads as well as the bridge, stating there may be a school bus driver who currently resides on Swartley Road whom would know exactly what she is referring to. Ms. Pierce then advised that people have been killed on Hilltown Pike at Swartley Road. Mr. Carroll stated he understood the concerns and noted this is an existing condition that PennDOT and the Township need to consider,

noting they would be in favor of any changes, but stated this concern is beyond the scope of the project and per ordinance a developer is to focus on the level of service. Mr. Nogami inquired if the developer was only looking at the level of service and flow and not necessarily the safety of the intersection and that safety was not a factor in the traffic study. Mr. Carroll responded that there are two categories: one is what the ordinance requires of the developer with offsite roadways and to focus on the volume and capacity. Mr. Carroll noted the reason for this is because safety issues at off site intersections are not in the purview of the developer to address as they are existing conditions noting whoever owns the road is where the remediation for safety concerns needs to start. Discussion ensued regarding Hilltown Pike being more dangerous due to its hill with a sharp turn onto a narrow road and wondering how a school bus or fire truck would maneuver this with traffic backed up through the turn. It was also noted that navigation apps are sending people down Swartley Road to make the left turn, and it was questioned whether the developer would widen the road for a right turn lane so traffic does not back up. Mr. Carroll noted again that this is something that PennDOT and the Township need to discuss. Mr. Horner stated they have not looked into a separate lane stating that PennDOT does not like to have two turning lanes at a non-signalized intersection, and mentioned that they also did not look into right of ways or how that would impact anything else.

Mr. Apple then inquired if Mr. Carroll had any more comments on the report or if he was done reviewing what he wanted. Mr. Carroll stated he was done and noted that the September 10, 2025 letter was a will comply. Mr. Carroll then broke down comments one through three of the letter, noting all responses from the developer were considered satisfied.

Mr. Apple mentioned that he has observed the prior Lennar proposal go through years of different iterations, which resulted in a new access between that project and Route 309 to alleviate traffic concerns on Swartley Road. He noted that the current plan does not consider this, such that there is no longer a way for a new signalized intersection at Route 309 to make it safer and to divert traffic away from Swartley Road. Mr. Apple noted this proposal does not allow this to even occur in the future and mentioned he would feel better if the P-loop street could provide for future connection to any future development that may occur on properties between Route 309 and this at roadway, nothing that currently they have shown no way to make this ever happen. Mr. Carroll responded that they noted the comment and this is not a property that they have control over, and further noted that it was also not a great location to direct active adult community traffic into the back of a commercial center. Mr. Carroll noted that for the past ninety years, it has been a junk yard. Discussion then ensued between the Commission and Mr. Carroll regarding traffic lights, turning restrictions, and the future stub road. Discussion then ensued between the commission and Mr. Carroll about traffic signals at Sterling Drive, Swartley Road, and the Galleria. Mr. Carroll stated that the developer wanted to make the internal road for the retirement village public, however the Township did not want to accept the road. Mr. Carroll mentioned that in no way does the developer benefit from the private roads. Mr. Apple then inquired if anyone from the public had comments.

Dale Ott of 246 Mill Road spoke about his concerns with traffic signals, turns, open space, community amenities, traffic, and street parking. Mr. Ott noted he would have liked more than two minutes to speak as well. Members of the Planning Commission then recited numerous documents and dates that were received for Mr. Ott to reference to answer some of his concerns.

June Brauer of 304 Swartley Road spoke about her concerns with water, her well, the new clubhouse, the lack of amenities within the development compared to others, the roads and the school buses – noting that she is a school bus driver, the bridge, turns, speed limits and stop signs.

Ms. Pierce then asked Mr. Carroll if she heard correctly earlier that the left turn on to Route 309 would be prohibited. Mr. Carroll then stated no, that the Township traffic engineer recommended that based on the traffic study done by the developer from Swartley Road to Route 309 but there was no further comment. Mr. Carroll stated this needs to be discussed with the Township Engineer on how the Township would like to handle the recommendation since this is an off-site area. Ms. Pierce then noted all the motor vehicle accidents that occurred when traffic was diverted to Schoolhouse Road and there was a temporary no left turn. Ms. Pierce also advised that the Commission forced another developer to re-do a bridge on Telegraph Road by South Perkaskie Road. Mr. Apple then asked if the public had any further comments.

Charles Brauer of 304 Swartley Road spoke about his concerns with splitting the road and recommending the curb and sidewalk be done and not waived.

Mr. Apple asked if there was any further public comment, to which there was none.

Mr. Carroll then addressed the public concerns and advised most of what they asked could be answered by looking at the plans and studies. Mr. Carroll also noted that the applicant is willing to discuss things with the Township to see how to help the process and are not opposed to that. Mr. Carroll also stated that they are working on the drainage on Swartley Road by a request of the Township so there is a willingness to work, the scope just needs to be clear.

Mr. Fulmer stated that the preliminary plan review was 90 days under MPC noting that the applicant did extend the review to allow sufficient time to revise and resubmit after receiving the review from Mr. Fulmer to address the concerns noted. Mr. Fulmer stated the review was extended to October 31, 2025. Discussion then ensued between the Commission. Mr. Bartholomew noted he wanted to challenge the results of the traffic study and look into the bridge more.

A motion by Mr. Bartholomew, seconded by Ms. Pierce and unanimously carried out to table the plan for one more month to look into this further.

4. PLANNING: None.
5. ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS: None.
6. OLD BUSINESS: None.
7. NEW BUSINESS: None.
8. PLANS TO ACCEPT FOR REVIEW ONLY (No Discussion): None.
9. PUBLIC COMMENT: Chairman Apple opened the floor for public comment.

Dale Ott of 246 Mill Road voiced his complaint on only allowing the public to speak for two minutes.

Charles Brauer of 304 Swartley Road spoke about his concerns with the 'no left-hand turn' at Swartley Road and Route 309.

June Brauer of 304 Swartley Road spoke about a motor vehicle accident and traffic control.

10. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS: None.

11. PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

12. ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Mr. Nogami, seconded by Ms. Pierce, and carried unanimously, the September 15, 2025, Hilltown Township Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Egan

Assistant Township Secretary

(*NOTE: These minutes were transcribed from notes and should not be considered official until approved by the Planning Commission at a public meeting).