Chester Township Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

|Wednesday, August 5, 2026 7:00 PM |
Chester Town Hall – Audio Recording on File

Meeting Called to Order by Mr. Oswick at 7:01 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Kats, Mr. Lauro, Mr. Mersol, Mr. Oswick, Mr. Rosenbaum, Mr. Spetrino

Members absent:
Admin present: Kathleen McCarthy, Becky Geissinger
BoT member present: None

Mr. Oswick led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Spetrino moved to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2026 meeting; Mr. Oswick seconded.
Mr. Kats/yes, Mr. Oswick/yes, Mr. Rosenbaum/yes, Mr. Spetrino/yes
Motion passes

Mr. Spetrino moved to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2026 meeting as modified, Mr. Oswick seconded.
Mr. Mersol/yes, Mr. Oswick/yes, Mr. Spetrino/yes Motion passes

Mr. Oswick moved to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2026 meeting as submitted; Mr. Spetrino seconded.
Mr. Lauro/yes; Mr. Mersol/yes; Mr. Oswick/yes, Mr. Rosenbaum/yes, Mr. Spetrino/yes,
Motion passes

Chester Township Zoning Resolution Amendments:
2026-4, 2026-5, 2026-6

These proposed amendments have been approved by the Zoning Commission and submitted to the Chester Township Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will hold the Public Hearing on Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 6:30. Mr. Mersol, Mr. Lauro, Ms. McCarthy and Ms. Geissinger plan on attending.

Additional conversations regarding 2 proposed amendments
2026-5 Blur the Lines and 2026-6 Accessory Buildings

Reviewed verbiage and real-life situations to verify the members of the Zoning Commission have a cohesive understanding.

Less than 2% of the properties in Chester are 5+ acres and can build an accessory building 4,800 SF up to 9,600 SF. How many parcels of land are in Chester that are 5+ acres? Answer: About 165 parcels. Total acreage of the township is 4,922 land parcels in Chester. Approximately 15,040 total acres in the township. 12.35% of the parcels in Chester are 5+ acres. Based on that, 608 parcels are 5+ acres.

APPROVED

Question came up with two adjoining properties, with the same owner, would this amendment allow the owner to build an accessory building larger than allowed by the principal residence lot acreage?

Question surfaced if this amendment applied to only the principal residence lot or the two lots combined. As the group was not in agreement as to how the amendment should be applied, it was agreed that the wording needed to be adjusted for better clarity.

Need to look at Section One, General Provisions of the Zoning Resolution for clarity. Also need to look at if this amendment only applies to two adjoining properties or if multiple properties – owned by the same owner – could allow a building to cross multiple property lines.

Need clarity of statement from Planning Commission if this applies to LLC's or "identified person property owners"? In January, at the ZC meeting, the group did determine that the property could be sold with a non-conforming structure located on it or partially on it.

Zoning Resolution 500.2 (D) referenced: "No lot held under one ownership at the time of the effective date of this resolution shall be reduced or subdivided in any manner below the minimum area, frontage, width and yard provisions required by this resolution."

Will we be able to answer these questions effectively if they come up at the Board of Trustees Public Hearing on August 20, 2026?
Key points that need to be answered include:

- Will the person building the lot be able to cross lot lines? If the answer is no, that wording needs to be incorporated into the language.

Key takeaway – Consider this only applies to properties that are land-locked.

- Should this only be considered in R3 zones?
- It does not matter what zoning district you are in, it just matters how much acreage is on the lot.
- Could we say this only applies on "vacant parcels"? We need to add the phrase, "vacant parcels" into existing amendment language.
- Instead of using the phrase, "single ownership" it was suggested to use "identical ownership."

For ZC-2026-6
Ongoing concerns about the allowable height of an accessory building. Consensus remains that a 30' height is reasonable.

Discussion regarding how, historically, the Board of Zoning Appeals has processed appeals for blurring the lines and size of accessory buildings, and how the outcomes have affected the Township.

APPROVED

2026 NEO Planning & Zoning Workshop

Mr. Mersol and Ms. Geissinger plan on attending, Ms. McCarthy is unsure, and everyone else will advise one way or the other.

Old Business to be addressed at future meetings

Signage – The Geauga County Model Zoning Signage Section (VII) was reviewed for replacement of the existing signage section of the current Zoning Resolution. Definitions were reviewed. Suggested measurements were presented and discussed for reasonableness.

Group would like to know from Chris Alusheff what the "problem" is with the sign at the former Ms. Pat's Day Care. That same "problem" is an issue at Valley Villa Custard.

Need to investigate the "signage concern" at the Gourmet Olive store on Chillicothe.

Extended discussion regarding signage and the need for additional changes to be discussed in the future.

Data Centers – Tabled for future meeting. Needs to be looked at. Highest need is to define the size of a data center that can be allowed. Data Centers need to be defined (specifically size) in our definitions and listed as a permitted use.

ADU's – In Fall, 2025 Community Survey, very strong community support for Attached Accessory Dwelling Units**.** Residents felt this would help improve their properties. Some members of the zoning commission felt this would not be a good idea. Currently, it may not be a problem, but 20 years down the road may be an issue.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations - Brief review/overview of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations document submitted by Mike Santilli, Chester Fire Inspector. Mike will be invited to future meeting to discuss further.

Home Business - Type of business permitted in home - Discussion regarding businesses being run out of a personal residence. Concern especially centered around businesses that have more than one "work" truck in their driveway.

New Business

Items for future consideration

APPROVED

- Continue to review Zoning Resolution by Section/Article

Meeting Called to Close at: 8:37 p.m.

Planned Approved by: Chester Township Zoning Commission September 2, 2026

Final Review by: _____
Jon Oswick, Chair

APPROVED