

HARTLAND TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION **APPROVED** REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES

JANUARY 23, 2025– 7:00 PM

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1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fox called the Work Session meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:**
3. **Roll Call and Recognition of Visitors:**  
Present – Commissioners Eckman, Fox, Grissim, Mayer, McMullen, Mitchell, & Murphy  
Absent – None
4. **2025 Annual Planning Commission Organizational Meeting:**
  - a. **Hartland Township Planning Commission Rules and Procedures (By-Laws).** A Motion to approve the Rules and Procedures was made by Commissioner Grissim and seconded by Commissioner Eckman. Motion carried unanimously.
  - b. **Election of Officer.** A Motion was made by Commission Mayer to retain Commissioner Fox as Chair, Commissioner Mitchell as Vice-Chair, and Commissioner Murphy as Secretary, seconded by Member Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.
  - c. **Committee Appointments.** Chair Fox indicated that there would be no changes to the Committee Appointments. A vote was not necessary.
5. **Approval of the Meeting Agenda:**  
A Motion to approve the January 23, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Agenda was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner McMullen. Motion carried unanimously.
6. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**
  - a. Joint Board of Trustees and Planning Commission Special Work Session Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2024.  
A Motion to approve the Joint Board of Trustees and Planning Commission Special Work Session Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2024, was made by Commissioner Grissim and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.
7. **Call to the Public:**  
None
8. **Public Hearing**
  - a. Zoning Amendment #25-001 – Amendment to permit in-ground swimming pools in front yard of waterfront lots

**Chair Fox explained the process and opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 PM stating all public notice requirements have been met.**

Director Langer gave an overview of the history of this amendment stating the following:

- Zoning amendments alter the text in the Zoning Ordinance.
- No particular location; Township wide.
- For waterfront properties, the area between the house and the water is considered the front yard but the Zoning Ordinance prohibits swimming pools and the required fencing in the front yard.
- Applicant came requesting a swimming pool on a waterfront lot and it could not be approved.
- Discussed in a word session.
- Amendment is for inground swimming pools only and the required fencing.

**Call to Public:**

None

**Chair Fox closed the Public Hearing at 7:09 PM.**

**Discussion**

Chair Fox referred to the staff review letter dated January 16, 2025.

Commissioner Mayer asked about the potential for pool fencing obscuring the view of the lake for the neighbors.

Director Langer replied the requirement is for a four (4) foot fence. It was discussed noting that an obscuring fence product would block the pool owners' view and would most likely not occur. There have been very few requests for inground pools on lakefront properties but if the Planning Commission has concerns, it can be addressed.

Commissioner Grissim stated during the discussion the consensus was to make the fencing as transparent as possible. Also, the text states a minimum of four (4) feet; she would like four (4) feet to be the maximum height allowed, it must meet the code requirement but be no taller to reduce the impact on the neighbors.

Commissioner Murphy agreed with the earlier comments stating "transparent" may need to be defined.

Commissioner Eckman stated he does not feel a four (4) foot opaque fence would be detrimental or obscure much of anyone's view, the pool owner might want a little privacy.

Chair Fox stated shrubs could be planted to ensure privacy if desired, the intent is to only allow the fencing around the pool as required.

Commissioner Mayer asked about the setback from the water's edge. Director Langer responded that each Zoning District has its own setbacks but generally it is fifty (50) feet from the water's edge. Chair Fox stated typically a pool is placed closer to the house.

The Planning Commission briefly discussed the fence standards.

- Required height, no taller.
- Only around the pool.

Chair Fox asked how they should proceed. Should there be a vote? Director Langer stated yes. Then it will go to Livingston County and ultimately the Township Board for final adoption. The Effective date is typically when it is published.

The Planning Commission discussed the wording of the amendment regarding fences.

**The consensus of the Planning Commission was to modify the draft ordinance amendment to read as follows with the changes in bold and tonight's changes in ALL CAPS:**

*AMENDMENT TO PERMIT IN-GROUND SWIMMING POOLS IN FRONT YARD OF WATERFRONT LOTS PROPOSED AMENDMENT*

*Section 5.14.3.D. Private Swimming Pools*

*i. Location. Private swimming pools shall be permitted as an accessory use in the rear or side yard in residential districts, provided that pools in the side yard of parcels that are two (2) acres or smaller shall be screened from the road. Pools shall not be located in any road or utility right-of-way or easement, except as provided in this Section. Positive drainage shall be maintained in accordance with the Township's Engineering Design Standards. **In-ground swimming pools may be permitted between the single family house and the waterfront, on waterfront shore line properties, provided that the in-ground swimming pool complies with all other required setback requirements, lot coverage requirements, and other applicable zoning standards.***

*ii. Setbacks. Private swimming pools and their associated decks or hard surface surrounds shall comply with the setback requirements for an accessory structure. The pool surrounds, including all decks and impervious perimeters shall be calculated as part of the maximum lot coverage. Pools shall be constructed no closer than ten (10) feet to any building on the same parcel.*

*iii. Fencing. Private swimming pools shall be enclosed within a minimum four (4) foot high fence. All fences shall be subject to the requirements in Section 5.20. Entry shall be by means of a self-closing, self-latching gate. The latch shall be on the inside so that it is not readily available to children to open. Gates shall be securely locked when the pool is not in use. A fence shall not be required for pools that are wholly or partially above ground, provided that the wall of the pool is at least four (4) feet in height and that no ladder, deck or other structure provides access to the pool while it is unattended. **In-ground swimming pools on waterfront properties shall be permitted to install the required fencing around the pool area, WITH A HEIGHT NOT TO EXCEED THE MINIMUM REQUIRED, and is located in between the single family house and waterfront.***

**Commissioner Mitchell offered the following Motion:**

**Move to recommend approval of Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment #25-001, as outlined in the staff memorandum dated January 16, 2025, and as amended above. Seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.**

**9. Call to the Public:**

None

**10. Planner Report:**

Director Langer mentioned the Zoning Enforcement Officer, Dan Loftus, will be leaving the Township at the end of January but has made himself available to help train a replacement.

**a. Year in Review**

Director Langer shared typically the Planning Department submits an annual report to the Township Manager for the Township Board, but this year's format has been revised and attached for any comments or corrections.

**11. Committee Reports:**

None

**12. Adjournment:**

**A Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Eckman and seconded by Commissioner Mayer. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:23 PM.**

Submitted by.



Tom Murphy  
Planning Commission Secretary