



Planning Commission

Larry Fox, Chairperson Summer L. McMullen, Trustee
Michael Mitchell, Vice-Chairperson Sue Grissim, Commissioner
Tom Murphy, Secretary Jim Mayer, Commissioner
Matthew Eckman, Commissioner

Planning Commission Meeting - WORK SESSION ONLY Agenda
Planning Commission Meeting
Thursday, July 09, 2026
7:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - a. [Planning Commission Work Session Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2026](#)
6. Call to Public
7. Work Session
 - a. [Backyard Chickens/Poultry](#)
8. Call to Public
9. Planner's Report
10. Committee Reports
11. Adjournment

HARTLAND TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION **DRAFT** WORK SESSION MEETING
MINUTES

May 14, 2026– 7:00 PM

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 Fox, Mayer, McMullen, Grissim, Mitchell, Murphy & Eckman
Absent – None
4. **Approval of the Meeting Agenda:**
A Motion to approve the May 14, 2026, Planning Commission Work Session Meeting Agenda was made by Commissioner Grissim and seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.
5. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**
 - a. Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of April 23, 2026.
A Motion to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of April 23, 2026, was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Eckman. Motion carried unanimously.
6. **Call to the Public:**
None
7. **Work Session**
 - a. Backyard Chickens/Poultry Ordinance Amendment
Director Langer outlined the draft ordinance from the Ordinance Review Committee. Items discussed included the following:
 - Zoning districts that would permit backyard chickens
 - Minimum Lot Size Requirements
 - Setback from property lines for chicken coop and chicken run
 - Discussion on whether the ordinance should include all Poultry/Fowl or just be limited to Chickens.
8. **Call to the Public:**
None
9. **Planner Report:**
Planning Director Langer indicated that a new business was proposed in the Village of Hartland area. The business was a proposed dog grooming business. The Planning Commission agreed that this would be a permissible use in the LC (Limited Commercial) district as a personal service.

10. Committee Reports:

Member Eckman questioned the current Township Board policy on filing a complaint and wondered if the Township could accept anonymous complaints. Other Planning Commission members outlined their thoughts on this topic and also commented on increasing Code Enforcement in the commercial areas of the Township. Member McMullen would raise this topic with the Township Board.

11. Adjournment:

A Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 PM.

Hartland Township Planning Commission Meeting Agenda Memorandum

Submitted By: Troy Langer, Planning Director

Subject: Backyard Chickens/Poultry

Date: July 2, 2026

Recommended Action

Move to Initiate Ordinance Amendment regarding Backyard Chickens/Poultry.

Discussion

This memorandum is intended as a follow up from the on-going discussion of the Planning Commission and the Township Board regarding an ordinance amendment to permit “backyard chickens” in all single family zoning districts.

Some time ago, a resident sent an email to the Planning Commission to request an amendment to the Ordinance that would permit “Backyard Chickens” on smaller lots and the structures devoted to housing chickens allowed to be closer to the property line than the current ordinance. The Planning Commission referred this matter to the Ordinance Review Committee (ORC).

Background

The current ordinance permits “fowl/poultry” in the CA (Conservation Agriculture) zoning district, provided the parcel is a minimum of 2.5 acres and all structures housing the animals must maintain a 100-foot setback. The 2.5-acre parcel would be permitted up to 50 animals, and an additional acre is required for more animals. With regard to permitting a rooster, which is often identified as a noise concern, a rooster would be permitted and subject to general noise requirements.

The ORC has proposed a draft ordinance amendment that would permit “Backyard Chickens” or poultry in all single-family residential districts. The draft ordinance would also eliminate roosters and reduce the setbacks for structures housing those animals.

Attachments:

1. Draft Ordinance

TOWNSHIP OF HARTLAND
AMENDMENT TO PERMIT BACKYARD CHICKENS
IN SINGLE FAMILY DISTRICTS

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Section 2. Definitions

88. FARM: The land, buildings, and machinery used in the commercial production of farm products. farm products are plants and animals useful to human beings and includes, but not limited to, forage and sod crops, grains and feed crops, dairy and dairy products, poultry and poultry products, livestock including breeding and grazing, fruits, vegetables, flowers, seeds, grasses, trees, fish, apiaries, equine and other similar products. To be considered a farm hereunder, the parcel shall contain ten (10) or more contiguous acres. For the purposes of this Ordinance, farms shall not include establishments for keeping or raising furbearing animals, private stables, commercial dog kennels, piggeries, greenhouses or stockyards, unless such establishments are combined with other bona fide farm operations listed above which are located on the same continuous tract of land of not less than 40 acres. A farm which is operated as a business for purposes of agricultural production is distinguished from a collection of farm buildings and animals that is operated for education, demonstration, or recreational purposes. Such quasi-farm operations may be known as “petting zoos.”

89. FARM BUILDING: Any building or structure other than a dwelling, moved upon, maintained, used or built on a farm which is essential and customarily used on farms of that type for the pursuit of agricultural activities.

- A. **Chicken Coop:** A structure for the keeping and housing of chickens also referred to as a coop. The coop shall be constructed and maintained so that the chickens are not able to escape from the coop.
- B. **Chicken Run:** An enclosed area attached to the chicken coop where chickens can roam unsupervised. The run shall be constructed and maintained so that the chickens are not able to escape the run.

Section 4.10 Keeping of Animals

- 2. Domesticated Animals. Except for a farm, as defined in Section 2.2, or as superseded by the Right to Farm Act (P.A. 93 of 1981, as amended), the raising and keeping of Domesticated Animals, as defined in Section 2.2, shall be permitted only in the CA District and subject to the following conditions:
 - A. Minimum lot size for cattle, equine, swine and sheep or goats shall be five (5) acres. Minimum lot size for poultry, fowl, turkeys, and geese shall be two and one half (2.5) acres. The minimum lot size for all other animals shall be determined based upon the size of the largest animal kept.
 - B. The number of Domesticated Animals allowed for each acre of lot size is identified in the following table. Where there are different types of animals kept on the same parcel, the required lot size must be calculated as the combined total requirement for each type of animal (for example, one cattle, one equine and two swine require a total of six (6) acres).
 - C. All lots shall be properly fenced in such a manner that no livestock, poultry or other animals will run at large.
 - D. No animal waste shall be accumulated or be stored within one hundred (100) feet of a property line. No structure for housing such animals shall be located within one hundred (100) feet of a property line. **This provision shall not apply to the housing of chickens or the storage of animal waste for chickens.**

- E. Animals shall be maintained and accommodated in a manner so as not to pose a nuisance to adjoining property or a hazard to water quality and public health, safety, and welfare.
- F. As an exception to the requirements outlined above, chickens shall be deemed permissible in all single-family residential zoning districts, including CA, RUR, RR, STR, RE, SR, MDR, and HDR zoning districts.
- G. It shall be unlawful for any person to own, keep, harbor, or have under their care, custody, or control any cock or rooster chicken two (2) months of age or older.
- H. All chickens shall be housed in a chicken coop and run. The chicken coop and run shall require a land use permit properly issued by the township and shall comply with the following provisions:
 - i. The chicken coop and run must be in good repair, capable of being maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, free of vermin, obnoxious smells and substances;
 - ii. The chicken coop and run shall not constitute a nuisance or disturb neighboring residents due to noise, odor, or threats to public health;
 - iii. The chicken coop and run shall not be permissible in the front yard area and shall be treated as an accessory building; however, specific setback requirements noted in this section shall apply;
 - iv. The chicken coop shall comply with the lot coverage requirements of the particular zoning district the property is located within. The run shall not be counted toward the lot coverage requirements, unless it is covered;
 - v. Chickens shall not be permitted to run at large on the property and shall be confined to the chicken coop and run area;
 - vi. Offal, manure, and waste material shall not be permitted to accumulate nor be confined in any manner that is conducive to breeding or attraction of flies, mosquitoes, or other noxious insects or in any manner that endangers public health or safety. The offal, manure, and waste material shall be properly disposed of so odors from the chickens, manure, or chicken related substances shall not be perceptible beyond the boundaries of the property;
 - vii. All grain, feed, and materials intended for use as food for chickens shall be kept in a tightly fitted container constructed to keep out vermin and wild animals;
- I. Deceased chickens shall be properly disposed of in a proper manner, according to all health and safety standards;
- J. The number of chickens, setbacks for the chicken coop, and chicken run, as well as minimum lot size provisions are outlined below:

4.10.2.J. Keeping of Chickens: Minimum Lot Size	
Number of Chickens	Minimum Lot Size
1-10 animals	30,000 sq ft/0.68 acres
11-20 animals	1 acre
21-30 animals	1.5 acres
31-40 animals	2 acres
41-50 animals	2.5 acres
51-100 animals	5 acres
101 animals	10 acres
Additional 50 animals per acre	Above 10 acres

4.10.2.J. Keeping of Chickens: Setback*	
Number of Chickens	Setback*
1-10 animals	15 feet
11-20 animals	25 feet
21-30 animals	30 feet
31-40 animals	40 feet
41-50 animals	40 feet
51-100 animals	60 feet
101 animals	100 feet
Additional 50 animals	100 feet

* The setbacks in this table are determined by the number of animals, not the acreage.