JENKINTOWN BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday September 15th, 2026

6:30pm – 8:00pm

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Meeting attendees present from Jenkintown Borough Planning Commission (JBPC): Phil Zimmerman (Chair), Eric Horowitz, Allison Shertzer, Jon McCandlish, Peter Van Do, Lucinda Bartley
Attending: Claire Warner (Montgomery County Planning Commission), Maureen Lucak (Environmental Advisory Committee; Street Tree Sub-committee), Deborra Sines Pancoe (Borough Council, Chair of Public Works Subcommittee)

Call to Order

Public Comment

- None

Reports/Actions

- May meeting minutes approved
- July meeting minutes approved

New Business / Business for Discussion

- Zoning Review

Allison Shertzer presented the next phase of the Planning Commission's zoning review, following the recently passed revision of the zoning map. The revision placed rowhomes in the C and C-1 Modified districts, which allow single-family homes. However, the current zoning regulations do not allow for rowhomes, which are not defined as a use and further all single-family homes are required to have side yards and minimum widths that are incompatible with the existing housing stock. Allison met with Patrick Hitchins (Borough Solicitor) and George Locke (Director of Code Enforcement and Zoning) and it was agreed to solicit advice from the MCPC. Allison began working with Montgomery County Planning Commission staff, particularly Claire Warner AICP, to identify potential solutions.

The proposed approach is to:

- Add a specific definition for row home/row house to the zoning ordinance.
- Allow interior row homes to have no side yard.

- Establish minimum lot widths that better reflect Jenkintown's existing row homes. Norristown's ordinance was discussed as a useful model, including language based on the established median lot width on a block and a possible minimum of approximately 15 or 16 feet.
- Use the terms *rowhome*, *townhouse*, *attached dwelling*, and *multiple dwelling* consistently throughout the ordinance.

The PC discussed the costs and benefits of increasing the required width of rowhomes and the possibility of including requirements for elements like porches. The Planning Commission generally supported moving forward with language that would recognize and accommodate Jenkintown's existing rowhome pattern. Allison indicated that she would develop a proposal, drawing substantially from Norristown's ordinance and Montgomery County Planning Commission guidance.

Allison outlined the broader zoning review. The next major phase will address regulations in the NCR and Town Center districts, including development standards that may currently work poorly together or unnecessarily restrict development. The Commission recognized that these changes could be considerably more controversial than the rowhome issue. The group agreed that more discussion with Borough Council and staff will be needed before proposing substantial changes to the Town Center. The immediate effort will therefore focus on the relatively straightforward rowhome provisions while continuing to identify other problems in the ordinance.

Sub Committee and Initiative Updates

• Zoning Review

Moved to above.

• Bike and Pedestrian Safety Presentation (Eric Horowitz)

No updates.

• Street Tree Assessment / Approved Plant List (Peter Van Do and Lucinda Barrett)

Peter Van Do updated the PC on the street tree inventory, which will start in Town Center. The subcommittee will be meeting this month to discuss further.

• Historic Jenkintown / Horace Trumbauer PHMC Marker (Peter Van Do)

The draft program structure for the Horace Trumbauer dedication event ceremony has been shared with the Old York Road Historical Society and Council Member Deborra Sines Pancoe for input. Key speakers for the dedication event ceremony have been confirmed: Marion Rosenbaum will serve as a featured speaker in providing Historical Synopsis and David Rowland (President of the Old York Road Historical Society) will deliver the keynote address. Peter drafted a walking tour route and accompanying talking points for Jenkintown and shared it with the Old York Road Historical Society for feedback. For inspiration, Peter attended an Ambler walking tour hosted by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia, the sponsor of the upcoming Jenkintown tour. The subcommittee

will defer to the Old York Road Historical Society to take the lead on organizing the Horace Trumbauer display at the Jenkintown Library.

Ongoing Business

• Legacy Park Mural Conditional Use Review Update

Phil Zimmerman shared that he was able to meet the artist and see the mural. The PC is waiting on a conditional use permit to be approved, but Phil expects this to go through.

New Business: Addendum

The PC closed the September meeting with an impromptu discussion about the potential for a data center zoning ordinance for Jenkintown. Maureen Lucak encouraged the PC to consider being prepared for any future proposals, which could include designating data centers as a conditional use. Rob Ghorman pointed out that most data centers currently being built in Pennsylvania are larger than the entire borough of Jenkintown. However, many municipalities are adopting regulations, and Claire Warner noted that there is language available from Montgomery County. Allison Shertzer observed that regulating a use that has no chance of being proposed may appear as an ideological stand. The discussion concluded without a clear proposal to move forward.

Adjournment