

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

SMART GROWTH COMMITTEE OF BOROUGH COUNCIL

Date: Wednesday, January 11, 2026 @ 5:30 PM

Committee Members: Jerry Szczepaniak, Chair
Stephen Marvin
Bryan Travis

Staff: Aaron Flook, Director of Building, Housing & Code Enforcement
Sean Metrick, Borough Manager

- I. Call to order -5:30pm
- II. Announcements- Public hearing to adopt the Park & Recreation Open Space Plan February 18, 2026 at 6:30pm
- III. Comments, suggestions, petitions by residents in attendance regarding items not on the agenda. *(Please be advised that all public comments have a 5-minute time limit.)* None
- IV. Reports
 - A. Director's report – Aaron Flook presents the monthly statistical Code Enforcement/Rental/Permitting report, announces the addition of a new Code Enforcement Officer, and goes on to review the pending Zoning Hearing Board submissions and Planning Commission status. Mr. Szczepaniak asks to clarify the amount of time allowable to clear sidewalks from snow. Mr. Flook response, 24 hours after the last of the snow had fallen. Mr. Travis asks how long the point system has been in place. Mr. Flook responses by being unsure as he has only been in the position for seven months. Mr. Travis goes on to ask with regard to noise complaints if the point system is really a deterrent. Mr. Flook offers that this year there have been more noise complaints than ever. Landlord and Property Maintenance companies take these complaints very seriously and are very responsive keeping their tenants compliant. Mr. Travis asked about how cases are closed in the portal. Mr. Flook response that these cases are carry overs from when originally opened, not necessarily opened, and closed within the month, each citation starts with an open case. Mr. Travis asks about the open cases and if they were mostly rental related. Mr. Flook answers by letting Committee know 50% were trash, 20% were property maintenance and the rest were approximately all rental licenses. Mr. Travis continues asking what the approximate time is when a permit is applied for and when it is issued. Mr. Flook replies our average is twelve days. Code allows 30 business days to review commercial applications. He explains the permitting process, after an application is submitted, the Borough has thirty days to review. If additional information is required then submitted, the clock starts again, as it is considered a “non-complete” application as defined by the PAUCC (building codes). Mr. Szczepaniak asks for public comments or questions, with none, Committee moves on to next agenda item.
- V. Smart Growth Committee – Chair report – Smart Growth 2026 Goals/Objectives- Mr. Szczepaniak reviews the goals and objectives for 2026. All development projects are of interest for constituents and stakeholders and it would be great to have this information on the website to access 24/7, in all stages of approval and construction. He gives an example of Phoenixville Borough website. Mr. Metrick notes that we have had this project in the works already and is excited to have it available. Mr. Marvin asks if the County has any of this information available. Mr. Metrick explains the County is the source of most of our tax parcel information and the software that Building & Housing use is fed by Chester County GIS information. Mr. Flook added work is being done to get this project finished. Mr. Szczepaniak goes on to the second initiative, to work with the Sustainability Advisory Committee to create tools for residents, businesses owners and stakeholders for reliable information on renewable energy sources. Mr. Marvin added that he is interested in getting more solar panels and wind energy turbines installed in the Borough from a zoning perspective. The third initiative researching the possibility of having a data center open in the Borough, if viable, looking forward with ordinances and

codes to be put in place to regulate. Mr. Flook added that our Traffic Engineer is already looking into this to stay ahead of the possibility of a data center being built in the Borough.

VI. Old Business

- A. Motion to approve Smart Growth Committee minutes – December 12, 2025-3:0 Recommend approve

VII. New Business

- A. Consider directing the Solicitor to attend Zoning Hearing Board

1. 1038-515 Spring Grove Ln-Impervious coverage and dimensional relief for addition.-2:1 recommend not sending Solicitor to attend
2. 1039-138 Magnolia St-Special Exception for student housing-Mr. Flook explains to Committee this application is unique as the procedure they are seeking is not really how it should be-3:0 recommend sending Solicitor to attend

Lisa Kearns, W. Biddle Street, asks if the Borough is still issuing student rental licenses. Mr. Metrick offers that it is permitted use in the zoning code, provided the property meets the criteria of the ordinance, and if the property is following code, a student rental license could be issued. Sean Berry, Linden Street, comments there is a young family that lives in the house now and would like to see it remain a non-student rental. The property is listed on Zillow to rent for \$4,000 a month for a five bedroom house. He continues that affordable housing is a concern in the Borough especially for young families. Nicole Scimone, Keystone Alley, is a representative of Ward 4, she expressed concern with this application and thought applying for student rentals was no longer possible. Mr. Metrick expressed that in the code, student home is permissible if the property meets the standards of the code. There is no limit to the amount of student rentals licenses, which would be illegal in zoning, but there is a standard a property must meet before a Special Exception is granted to allow a student rental license. Ms. Scimone clarifies that this applicant is asking for relief from those standards to allow a student home. Mr. Metrick confirms this. Mr. Flook continues that all uses have to be allowed somewhere, uses cannot be banned, and municipalities use Conditional Uses and Special Exceptions to highly control a use.

- B. Motion to approve HARB applications-3:0 recommend motion to approve with HARB recommendations

Issue: Consider a Motion to approve the January HARB Certificate of Appropriateness

1. 2026-01: 139 W. Gay St-Sign
2. 2026-02: 21 S. Church St-Shutter replacement, paint, and deck repair
3. 2026-03: 27 W. Gay St-Sign and front façade
4. 2026-04: 225 N. High St-Cannon cover and exhibit space

VIII. Other business-None

IX. Adjournment-6:28pm

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