

**Brunswick Hills Township
Zoning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2025**

Call Meeting to Order

Mr. DeCastra called the Brunswick Hills Township Zoning Commission February 6, 2025 meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A roll call of the board was executed by Chair, Mr. DeCastra as Secretary, Ms. Beck is absent.

- **Board Members in Attendance:** Mrs. Wetterman, Ms. Brunn, Mr. Kelly, Mr. DeCastra
- **Alternate Board Members as voting members:** Mr. Smerek
- **Board Members Absent:** Mr. McFarland
- **Others in Attendance:** Mr. Nixon, Trustee. Mr. Witt, Alternate member

The board said the Pledge of Allegiance and held a moment of silence for our troops and first responders.

Approval of the ZC February 6, 2025 regular meeting minutes

Mr. DeCastra asked the board to review the meeting minutes and asked if anyone had any comments or corrections. A correction was asked to change “mins” to “minutes” of the header on the first page.

Motion: Mrs. Wetterman motioned to accept the minutes for the Zoning Commission February 6, 2025 regular meeting as amended. Mr. Kelly seconds.

Roll Call: Ms. Brunn- abstain, Mr. Smerek- yes, Mrs. Wetterman- yes, Mr. Kelly- yes, Mr. DeCastra- yes.

Meeting minutes were accepted with small modification.

OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Continuation of Commercial uses- updates on regulations:

Mr. DeCastra shared that after we discussed what goes in C1, C2 and C3 in our last meeting he wanted to bring two items to highlight in this meeting (there are also copies available for the public to review)

- 1) Understanding of our retail establishments- the first table labeled “retail establishments” he has gone through and identified the language that we have as new suggested language.
 - a. Redefine retail establishments as well as retail sales
- 2) Discussion of whether all of the different definitions of the approved or conditional businesses allowed on those zones are necessary, and should they be more broadly defined. In addition, are there any specific types of retail sales that are better to identify as excluded.

Mr. DeCastra stated that an option could be focusing on the exclusions and look at the areas in the zoning map where the retail establishment is allowed but up to a certain size. Mr. DeCastra encouraged everyone to review the document and we can finalize conversations on how we want to look at retail establishments. We can also look into where these commercial areas are located currently and have any updates been made in the past. Mr. DeCastra shared that he wants to further discuss as a board, if we want to be definitive in these commercial area zones, or do we want to be less definitive and more abstract to prevent confusion. Research on other communities surrounding us may also be helpful. We will discuss this again at our next meeting.

There are thirteen business decisions that are allowed in their commercial zones (conditional or already approved) that have additional language to them. Mr. DeCastra would like the board to take ownership of reading each section and return with questions, comments or concerns.

The board assigned each establishment as follows:

Automobile Service Station/Automobile Repair Shop subject to Subsection 804-14.	Mr. Witt	
Churches and other facilities/buildings for the purpose of religious, spiritual, and community gatherings subject to Subsection 804-5	Mr. Kelly	
Governmentally owned and/or operated building or facility subject to Subsection 804-8.	Mrs. Wetterman	
Sale, repair, and/or storage of automobiles, trucks, trailers, boats, and/or farm implements subject to Subsection 804-15. (definition of motorized vehicles including farm equipment) (Junk yard definition to exclude)	Mr. Witt	
Congregate housing for the elderly subject to Subsection 804-11. (Look at definition for "assistance living", "permanent supportive housing")	Ms. Brunn	
Adult Group Homes subject to Subsection 804-4. (Look at definition for "assistance living", "permanent supportive housing")	Ms. Brunn	
Special events subject to Subsection 804-1.	Mr. DeCastra	
Drive-in restaurants subject to Subsection 804-12.	Mr. DeCastra	
Multifamily dwellings subject to Subsection 804-16.	Ms. Brunn	
Outdoor business displays subject to Subsection 804-13.	Mr. DeCastra	
Automobile washing establishments subject to Subsection 804-10.	Mr. Smerek	
Self-storage buildings subject to Subsection 804-9	Mr. Smerek	

As we go through the retail establishment, Mr. DeCastra would like us to dive into the actual regulations of those. He has shared a picture/visual that defines the various lines (setbacks, lot lines, etc) that will be helpful as we read through the regulations.

Agricultural exemptions update on regulations:

Mr. DeCastra shared that currently, the Township does not allow any type of agricultural use on any properties that are under one acre in size. It's relevant today as egg prices have increased. In addition, people have called into the zoning office to inquire about chicken coops and the answer has always been no, especially in the subdivisions, where it is currently not allowed.

Mr. DeCastras shared that there are two items to keep in mind:

- 1) The Zoning Regulations states what is and is not allowed on the priorities
- 2) Subdivisions that have an HOA, the HOA can also regulate that usage even though the zoning regulations may allow it if changed. Just because we may open the door it does not mean it opens it up to all.

He has done research, for example, Hinkley has on their website under a frequently asked question that there are zero regulations on chickens. Same with Medina Township (not under frequently asked questions) however within their regulation, they have no mention of any type of agricultural limitation. For Montville, he has provided everyone with a copy of what their code is, specifically for agricultural usage. Using that as an example, he has provided everyone with a copy of our current zoning resolution and has redlined and crossed out the current language and the underlined would be the new language that would be replacing it. As a brief overview, it allows any lot of one acre or less the raising for private use, consumption or incidental sale of fruits, vegetables, animal and/or poultry husbandry stock shall be permitted provided no products shall be sold except those which are produced on the premises. No agricultural building or structure shall be constructed on the lot, except for one roadside stand as permitted in Sec 2.a) below. This way you cannot turn your house into a farmers' market. However, you can sell your own goods if you can't consume it all, you can also display it with one roadside stand within the regulation.

Mr. DeCastras notes that this not being modified today officially in the Zoning Resolution, but it's just an idea to include in our next round of updates. Mr. DeCastras asked the board to please review it over the next month and we will discuss it again.

NEW BUSINESS:

The board was presented with two commercial applications for our next meeting. Both are for above ground fuel storage tanks. They will be discussed and reviewed at our next meeting.

Mr. DeCastras asked if anyone else had any new business they would like to discuss. No new business was brought up. Mr. DeCastras moved on to public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Hudson, 314 Pearl Road.

Regarding the agricultural topic. Ms. Hudson inquired if we can be more specific and if there is an opportunity to add something for properties that are above five acres. That way it's more clear for the average person and they can better understand it. There are only a few properties that would fall under that category which is exempt by state statute. Especially for those that are already zoned for agriculture.

Tony Destro, 301 Marks Road.

Shared that he was looking at zoning meetings from different areas, the house on substation that has a lot of agricultural use on the front yard. They've had zoning violations in the past, he suggests the board looks at what they've been through and see how you may want to word it differently for the smaller lots as it was a big problem. For chicken coops, many times they are made out of pallets and plastic, so it may be worth adding verbiage about no plastics or pallets as it doesn't always look great for the neighbors.

Dave Goodyear, 691 Pearl Road.

In regard to the agricultural use, he suggests that the board defines it a little better and not just use the word "chickens". For example, guineas can make a lot of noise. When it's put into writing, he suggests talking about species of birds that can be in your yard. Mr. DeCastras asked Mr. Goodyear if his opinion is to now allow guineas? Mr. Goodyear stated that he would say to not allow it because they are loud and neighbors can complain. He thinks it's just ought to be defined better to chicken species.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 7pm

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Mr. DeCastra stated he will accept a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting of March 6th, 2025. Ms. Brunn motioned to adjourn, Mrs. Wetterman seconds.

Roll Call: Mr. Smerek- yes, Mr. Kelly- yes, Ms. Brunn- yes, Mrs. Wetterman- yes, Mr. DeCastra- yes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dalith Beck, Zoning Secretary

Thomas DeCastra, Chair	Date
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