

**Brunswick Hills Township  
Zoning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes  
April 2, 2026**

**Call Meeting to Order**

Mr. Witt called the Brunswick Hills Township Zoning Commission on April 2, 2026 regular meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

A roll call of the board was executed.

- **Board Members in Attendance:** Mr. Kalina, Mr. Witt, Mrs. Wetterman, Mr. McFarland
- **Alternate Board Members as voting members:** Mr. Smerek, Alternate Member
- **Board Members Absent:** Ms. Brunn
- **Others in Attendance:** Mr. DeCastr, Trustee, Mr. Humphrey, Assistant Zoning Inspector, Ms. Beck, Secretary.

Mr. Witt asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and for a moment of silence for our troops and first responders.

**Approval of the March 5, 2026 regular meeting minutes**

Mr. Witt asked the board if there were any updates or corrections to the meeting minutes. There were none.

**Motion:** Mr. McFarland motions to accept the March 5, 2026 Zoning Commission minutes as written. Mr. Smerek seconded the motion.

**Roll Call:** Mrs. Wetterman- yes, Mr. McFarland- yes, Mr. Smerek- yes, Mr. Kalina- yes, Mr. Witt- yes.

Meetings minutes approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Circle K (Corner of Sleepy Hollow & Pearl Road) PP # 001-02C-18-008- Map Amendment Application.

Bret Lamb, Real Estate Development Manager, Circle K, 35 Hudson County Drive, Hudson, Ohio  
Mr. Lamb is present on behalf of Circle K and the ownership group, noting that the property owners themselves were not present. He presented a request to rezone the subject parcel from C3 to C1 to accommodate a proposed Circle K convenience store and fueling station. He emphasized that Circle K intends to be a long term corporate presence, as all of their stores are corporate owned and operated rather than franchised. He stated that the company aims to be a responsible corporate neighbor by contributing jobs, tax revenue, and maintaining a positive relationship with the surrounding community. Throughout the discussion, he reiterated that Circle K is willing to follow whichever process the township determines is most appropriate, whether that involves rezoning or pursuing variances. With Mr. Lab, Mr Richard Blasey , Engineer and Project Manager, 7050 West Saginaw Highway, Michigan is also present and explained that the parcel is currently considered non conforming under certain zoning standards and that the intent of the project is to bring the site into functional compliance given its size and physical constraints. He described how the site plan was engineered to meet Circle K’s operational standards, including driveway widths, circulation patterns, and parking requirements, while working within the limitations of the lot. He noted that the shape and topography of the site, particularly a significant grade change near the intersection, created challenges that prevented the use of Circle K’s preferred “starter gate” or “dive-in” fueling configuration. As a result, the design was modified to include a stacked canopy with six fuel pumps, providing twelve fueling positions. He also explained that driveway placement had to be adjusted along Pearl Road to accommodate grade issues and right of way requirements, including a 25 foot tree clearance at intersections. He confirmed that while the building footprint remains consistent, the fueling layout and access points were revised to fit the constraints of the property.

The Commission discussed the current zoning status of the parcel and whether rezoning to C1 was appropriate. It was clarified that the lot is currently conforming under C3 zoning but would become non conforming under C3 due to the minimum lot size requirement of two acres, as the subject parcel is approximately 1.4 acres. Despite this, it was noted that the proposed use could largely be accommodated under C3 zoning, with the primary issue being that fuel pumps would require conditional use approval. Additional technical constraints were discussed, including a required 36 foot roadway width on Pearl Road as dictated by ODOT standards, which cannot be varied. It was also noted that parking could be adjusted closer to the right of way, as no buffer requirement exists in that location. Trustee, Mr. DeCastra confirmed that the parcel does not meet the minimum lot size for C3 zoning, reinforcing the non conformity concern.

Mr. Kalina raised concerns that rezoning a single parcel from C3 to C1 within a predominantly C3 corridor could constitute spot zoning, which is generally discouraged. He suggested that a more appropriate approach may be for the applicant to pursue this through the Board of Zoning Appeals by seeking a variance for the non conforming lot size and any additional required approvals.

Mr. Humphrey stated that the request does not constitute spot zoning because the use would remain commercial and consistent with the surrounding corridor, rather than introducing a fundamentally different land use. The discussion outlined two possible paths, one involving rezoning to C1 followed by conditional use approval, and another involving multiple steps through the BZA, including variances and conditional approvals. Kalina maintained that the BZA route would likely be more efficient and legally straightforward, expressing a desire for additional input from planning or legal professionals regarding the appropriate path forward.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The floor was opened for public comments specific to the Circle K proposal. There was no public comment.

Mr. Kalina raised concerns about stormwater management, noting significant existing water flow across the property. In response, Mr. Blasey explained that detailed engineering plans would be developed at a later stage, but preliminary analysis had identified an existing storm drain that would need to be rerouted. He stated that the project would include underground stormwater storage located between the fuel canopy and the building, with runoff directed into an existing ditch behind the site.

He clarified that the design would address only on site drainage in compliance with EPA and township standards and would not attempt to modify downstream drainage systems controlled by ODOT.

The Commission also discussed the site's proximity to residential properties, including concerns about the placement of dumpsters and potential visual or environmental impacts. Mr. Blasey indicated that specific screening measures had not yet been designed but noted that the site includes natural vegetation, steep grades, and a swale that may provide some level of buffering. No formal screening plan was presented at this stage.

Further clarification was provided regarding the updated site layout. The original concept included five fuel pumps in a preferred configuration, but due to site constraints, the revised plan includes six pumps under a reconfigured canopy. The Commission also discussed how fuel tanker trucks would access the site. Mr. Blasey explained that tankers would enter from Sleepy Hollow, loop through the site in a 180 degree pattern, and exit back onto Pearl Road. The building was shifted slightly north to accommodate this circulation. Discussion confirmed that Sleepy Hollow, as a county road, does not have weight restrictions that would prohibit tanker traffic.

#### **Process Recommendation**

Following discussion, Trustee DeCastra recommended that Circle K pursue approval through the Board of Zoning Appeals rather than seeking a rezoning to C1. He explained that the BZA route would likely be significantly faster, potentially allowing action within approximately 30 days, compared to a rezoning process that could take up to six months due to required hearing and approvals.

He noted that if Circle K proceeds with a completed site plan, they could appear before both the Zoning Commission and BZA in the near term and potentially begin construction as early as summer. He also emphasized that variances granted through the BZA would remain with the property, providing long term clarity. Circle K representatives indicated their willingness to proceed in accordance with this recommendation.

**OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS:**

Variance Time Limit Discussion

The Commission revisited a previously tabled discussion regarding time limits on variances. It was noted that the Commission is still awaiting a formal opinion from the Prosecutor’s Office, which was requested on March 10. This topic will be brought up again once opinion from the Prosecutor’s office is received.

Article 11 and ORC Alignment

The Commission discussed proposed updates to Article 11 of the zoning resolution to align with Ohio Revised Code Section 519.12, which governs zoning amendment procedures. Members indicated that the proposed changes are largely administrative and intended to ensure consistency with state law.

Mr. Kalina suggested that rather than adopting this change independently, the township should consider bundling it with other minor or housekeeping updates to streamline the amendment process. The Commission agreed to defer action and revisit the updates in conjunction with other future revisions.

Section 402-6-3 (Conservation/Overlay District)

The Commission continued discussion on potential revisions to Section 402-6-3, focusing on improving the functionality and accessibility of designated open space areas. Mr. Witt emphasized the importance of preventing situations where open space technically meets requirements but is not meaningfully accessible to residents. He also highlighted the goal of encouraging contiguous and connected conservation areas across developments.

Mr. Kalina added that new standards should consider broader planning factors, including annexation risks and infrastructure availability, particularly water and sewer access. He cautioned against overly restrictive regulations that could incentivize property owners to seek annexation into the City of Brunswick.

The Commission discussed examples of both poor and effective open space design, including developments where narrow strips of land create enforcement challenges versus more intentional designs that preserve natural features. The concept of a “yield plan” was introduced, requiring developers to demonstrate the number of buildable lots under conventional zoning before applying conservation design principles. The Commission agreed to continue reviewing these concepts and revisit the topic at a future meeting.

Bluebell Parkway Property

Trustee, Mr. DeCastra introduced a new proposal concerning property located off Bluebell Parkway. He explained that the existing settlement agreement currently allows for the development of two senior housing buildings totaling approximately 140 units. However, the developer is now proposing an alternative plan consisting of approximately 30 single family homes, which he believes is more consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and less impactful overall.

He proposed for the commission to consider rezoning the property to R3, which permits single family detached homes at a density of up to 5 units per acre. While the site could support up to 36 units under

this classification, the developer's proposal remains below that threshold. He noted that due to minimum lot size requirements, the developer would still need to seek variances through the BZA following rezoning.

Representatives for the developer, including legal counsel John Slater, explained that the property is currently governed by an older consent judgment permitting apartment development. They indicated that while it would be possible to amend that agreement, the township prosecutor has advised proceeding through the standard zoning amendment process instead.

The proposed single family homes would be built by Drees Homes and would range in size from approximately 2,500 to 4,000 square feet. The homes are intended for sale rather than rental, and the developer has already reduced the number of lots from earlier concepts as part of a compromise approach.

The Commission and residents discussed the role of an adjacent parcel known as Block G, which contains an existing pond and is intended to serve as open space and stormwater management. While there was consideration of including this parcel in the R3 rezoning, the Commission leaned toward keeping it zoned as rural residential (RR) to ensure its long-term preservation as open space.

Residents raised concerns about potential double counting of open space, the introduction of street lighting in an otherwise rural area, and the impact of new driveways directly accessing Bluebell Parkway. The developer responded that proposed lighting would be designed to minimize glare and light pollution, and that sidewalks and walking trails would be incorporated within the development.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Lucas Merkel, 131 Falmouth

Mr. Merkel spoke during the discussion of the Bluebell Parkway rezoning and asked for clarification regarding a separate 28 acre parcel located to the east of the proposed development. His primary concern was whether that parcel was also included in the legal settlement agreement and therefore subject to similar development rights. After it was clarified that the 28-acre tract is not part of the settlement and is not proposed for development in the same manner, Mr. Merkel indicated that this addressed his concern and concluded his comments.

Kris Kormos, 4215 Butterfly Circle

Mr. Kormos spoke regarding the Bluebell Parkway rezoning, focusing on open space designations. He asked for clarification about the parcel identified as "Block G," noting that while other areas on the plan are clearly labeled as Open Space A and Open Space B, Block G is not explicitly labeled as open space despite being discussed as such, including references to a pond, fountain, and walking trail.

He expressed concern that the developer may be relying on Block G, potentially part of the existing development, to satisfy open space requirements for the new project. He suggested that this could result in the same land effectively being counted twice toward open space requirements, which he viewed as inappropriate and not consistent with the intent of the zoning standards.

Kelly Friedel, 4201 Butterfly Circle

Ms. Friedel, who resides directly across from the proposed development, raised concerns about how the project may impact the existing character and function of Bluebell Parkway. She described the current conditions of the roadway as having no street lighting or sidewalks, contributing to a rural atmosphere, and noted ongoing concerns with police activity and unusual incidents at the end of the street.

She specifically asked whether the proposed development would introduce street lighting and, if so, how much additional illumination would be added and whether it would alter the existing rural character of the area. She also raised concerns about the proposed design of new homes having direct driveway access onto Bluebell Parkway. She noted that existing homes in her area do not have direct access to Bluebell, instead using internal private streets, and expressed concern that additional driveways could create complications for traffic flow, snow plowing, and overall access along what is currently the primary route in and out of the neighborhood.

Following discussion, the Commission reached consensus that single family development was a preferable outcome compared to the previously approved senior apartment buildings. A motion was made to initiate the zoning map amendment process to rezone parcel 0010-2D-27-037 to R3.

**Motion:** Mr. Kalina motioned to commence the amendment process and schedule a public hearing to rezone parcel No. 0010-2D-27-037 from RR to R1. Seconded by Mr. Smerek

**Roll Call:** Mr. McFarland- yes, Mrs. Wetterman- yes, Mr. Smerek- yes, Mr. Kalina- yes, Mr. Witt- yes.

The motion passed unanimously.

**ADDITIONAL BUSINESS:** None

**Scheduling of Public Hearings and Special Meeting**

The Commission scheduled a public hearing for the proposed Blue Bell Parkway rezoning from RR to R3 on Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 6:15 p.m., to be followed by the regular Zoning Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The Commission also scheduled a meeting for April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm which will be a brief special meeting to formally act on the previously held public hearing on rezoning of the Bluebell Parkway properties PP# 001-02D-27-035 and 001-02D-27-036 from RR to C1. Only standard meeting notice is required (no extra public hearing notice).

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:** April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:15 pm & 7:00 pm

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**Motion:** Mr. Witt made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Wetterman seconded the motion.

**Roll Call:** Mr. McFarland- yes, Mrs. Wetterman- yes, Mr. Smerek- yes, Mr. Kalina- yes, Mr. Witt- yes,

Adjourned at 8:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dalith Beck, Zoning Secretary

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Edward Witt, Chair

Date