



## Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

1454 Rome Corners Road, Galena, OH 43021

June 5, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

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**Call to order:** Damita called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Determination of a Quorum/Roll Call:** Members present were Jon Kerr, Damita Peery, Matt Allen, Tony Lonigro, Andy Kerr, and Jessica Duvall. Also present were Zoning Inspector David Weade, and Meeting Secretary Alison Newton.

**Motion to approve the minutes:** A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from May 1, 2025, by Tony seconded by Jon. Damita abstained. Motion approved 4-0.

**Announcements:** Our meeting this evening will conclude at 9:30 pm. Any unfinished business will be continued to July 10th, 2025, at 7 pm at 1454 Rome Corners Road, Galena Ohio 43021.

**Statement of policy:** As is the adopted policy of the Berkshire Township Zoning Commission, all applicants will be granted an opportunity to make their formal presentation. Following the applicant's presentation preliminary questions or points of clarification from the commission will be allowed. The audience will then be granted an opportunity to comment. Each individual will be granted three minutes. We ask that you be brief and to the point. The Chairperson may limit repetitive comments and close public comments after a reasonable time. The commission will ask questions and take action if needed.

**New business:**

Application # 25-056 Shawn Lanning, Hidden Creek Estates. The request is for the approval of the Final Development Plan for Section 2, 3, and 4 including 88 lots. The original final plan was approved in 2004. Because the original has expired the applicant must final a new plan.

The applicant, Jim Watkins, senior principal at Verdantas introduced himself and Barry Holmes, president of Homewood Corporation here today to speak on behalf of their application.

Jon asked about tab 3, the street tree and landscape plan. He asked them to talk about the reason for their selection of street and shade trees. Jim referenced the provided drawings and pointed out the location of the trees on the development. He further explained that these are typical trees that they see in open space areas that they have done in the past. Tony asked about the shade trees and their plan to spread those out. Jim explained that they have a variety of options for that area and could provide more specifics.

Damita asked about tab 1, and the design details of the architecture, specifically with the intention to have the

sides and front of the house to match each other. Barry explains that the builder, Trinity Homes, has specifics on these plans, but they are willing to change those specifics. Each of the homes has a design plan but the clients can make changes as they individually submit plans to the Township for approval. David asks if we can establish a set parameter for the builder to eliminate future troubles. There was general discussion about the provided floor plans and house models that were submitted from Trinity. The board inquired more about the size of homes, Barry thought 2500-3000sqft homes, but had trouble speaking for the builder as he indicated he is only the developer.

Matt referenced tab 1, pages 2-3, and noted that the applicant should reference Berkshire Township rather than ARC. He asked about the neighborhood north of their proposed development and the existing tree line. The applicant explained that they intend to keep the existing tree line, the only disturbance being the pathway that will connect through the area.

Tony asked for clarification on the summary that they presented regarding all four architectural sides of the houses will match. Tony thought that they should change that language to indicate that they will not all match, rather they will have similar style. Barry indicated that he would clarify this language. Jon reiterated that the sides of the houses should look similar in style to the front elevation. Damita summarized that there should be more specifics in this section. Further, Damita noted the presence of vinyl siding on the front elevation. Barry said that he will eliminate vinyl from the approved building materials on the front elevation.

David explained what has happened in the past regarding house plans that are approved by the board, as many end up with variations. He will base future approvals of house plans based on what is approved here by the board on this final development plan. He noted that if they can provide specifics today it will eliminate future issues with the house builders and zoning certificates. Barry indicated he would reach out to Trinity homes for a more defined list of house plans with explicit variations.

Tony and Jim talked about final engineering and utility plans. David mentioned that they have provided this, and it is acceptable. Tony also wanted to bring up the request for a divergence from rear setback from 20 to 30 feet, and make sure the board saw this and that the developer includes this in their final note.

Tony asked for rationale behind the presence of the cul-de-sacs— Jim provided some history and context for this design decision. These were originally to be stub roads, but it was changed to cul-de-sac. These better fit their overall plans and they have worked with the school districts to connect the subdivision to the two neighboring schools.

Jon asked about block versus poured concrete foundations, Barry indicated that they are block foundations and it would be mostly visible on the sides, not from the front. Damita asked about basement height, the applicant noted 13 course basements, with probably only 2 blocks above grade.

Jon asked for an explanation about the final development plan densities. Jim referenced the numbers in the application and provided details about percentages of open space.

### **Public Participation:**

Cindy Sparks, neighbor to the north, asked about the plans for the tree line to the north of the development that separates their property.

Mary Howard, asked about lot lines that extend into the tree line buffer and the tree preservation. She also asked if there is anything in the plan to make sure the same style house is not next to each other.

Jim said they will get back to Cindy Sparks about the tree line as he does not know without further research. Barry thought that it would be very rare that two houses next door are the exact same. Both the homeowners and the builders don't want the same types of houses next to each other. To address Mary's other question, he noted that in some cases the property line stops before the tree line and in other cases the lot lines extend through the tree line. There is no guarantee that homeowners would not remove trees on their property.

The board and the applicant reviewed the changes needed to the application and they are as follows:


1. Square footage language needs clarified in the text to match the house plans that were submitted.
2. Change to no vinyl material on the front elevation of the houses.
3. Set verbiage to garage extending no farther than 4 feet in front of the front line of the house.
4. Copies of the utility plans (7) provided in the application.
5. Pages need to be numbered.
6. Add verbiage about preserving trees to be added.
7. Add text that block can be exposed on the front and sides.
8. Add text about the 13-course basement, 2 blocks above ground.
9. Note the divergence for the 20ft rear setback.
10. Clarification that all sides of the house will not be the same.
11. Clarification about the shade trees, and their location by species.
12. Provide more color renderings of elevations.
13. Add language about review board and Berkshire Township, rather than ARC

Damita made a motion to continue application # 25-056 to July 10<sup>th</sup>. Tony seconded. Motion approved 5-0. David will need the updated materials by noon on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Tony at 8:07 p.m. Seconded by Jon. Motion approved 5-0.



Zoning Inspector



Meeting Secretary



Date



Zoning Commission Members