



Planning & Zoning Commission
Tuesday, March 24, 2026 - 5:00 PM
MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Steve Dyer called to order the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting for March 24, 2026 at 5:02 p.m.

Present - Steve Dyer, Kyle Cook, Mark Zolendziewski, Brian Hiebel, Todd McConnell
Absent - None

Staff present - Jeff Sheridan, Trevor Traphagen - City Planner, Donny Barnard - City Council, Teresa Monroe - Clerk of Council

Public present - Jesse Coppel, Jamie McNally, Alan Benton, Justin Fox, Mr. Johnson

2. Public Comment on items not on the agenda

No comments

3. Approval of Minutes

a. March 10, 2026

ACTION: Kyle Cook moved to approve; Mark Zolendziewski seconded and the vote was as follows:

AYES: Steve Dyer, Kyle Cook, Mark Zolendziewski, Brian Hiebel

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Todd McConnell - Absence

Passed 4 - 0

4. TABLED - Application # 9-22-25 Conditional Use; 65 S. Main Street - Wall mural

a. Application; tabled pending building owner approval of exterior changes to brick and a proposed sign/size and location

Applicant not in attendance and no updates on the items requested have been provided.

ACTION: Kyle Cook moved to dismiss the application; Steve Dyer seconded and the vote was as follows:

AYES: Kyle Cook, Todd McConnell, Brian Hiebel, Steve Dyer

NOES: Mark Zolendziewski

ABSTAIN: None

Passed 4 - 1; application will be removed from further consideration

Kyle Cook stated that they definitely think the mural is a good idea, they just need the applicants to be here, they will need to reapply.

Clerk note; the applicant has not provided the board requested documents for approval which were written approval from the building owner and rendering of the mural with size and requested placement.

5. Application # 3-12-26 Approval of Subdivision without Plat; 395 W Jersey Street

a. Application & Planner comments

Jesse Coppel was present for the application, he said they are doing a lot split, property location is the city's water treatment plant that is next to JYAA. He said the entities are doing a land sale/swap, the city is buying eight acres from JYAA on the other side of Mink and giving this half-acre to JYAA. He added that JYAA won't be able to do a lot combination because the city's part is in the city and JYAA is in the township. Kyle Cook asked if this was already approved by the city. Mr. Coppel said the contract has been signed by the city but the lot split has to be approved. The planner review letter states that the proposed split meets the minimum standards of the UR-2 zoning district. Chairman Dyer said this will be a benefit to the city and to JYAA.

ACTION: Steve Dyer moved to approve; Kyle Cook seconded and the vote was as follows:
AYES: Steve Dyer, Kyle Cook, Todd McConnell, Brian Hiebel, Mark Zolendziewski
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None

Passed 5 - 0

6. Application # 3-6-26 Approval of Subdivision without Plat; 11943 Johnstown-Utica Rd

a. Application

Jamie McNally with Johnstown Land Company, the property owner, said this strip of land is .267 acres, they were approached by Granville Milling to accommodate their drive-through expansion which was reviewed at a previous planning commission meeting. They asked if they could acquire a strip of land from the Johnstown Land Company and being good neighbors, they said yes. Once the lot split is completed, they will transfer it to Granville Milling and then this lot will be combined with Granville Milling's existing property. Discussion on ways to ensure that the combination takes place. Todd McConnell asked if the proposed Clover Valley bypass options were a concern. Planner Trevor Traphagen said he wouldn't think so because property transactions are going to happen along any major corridor over time and if that corridor is ultimately selected, the property owner at the time would have to be engaged.

ACTION: Mark Zolendziewski moved to approve with the condition that the newly created lot is merged with the Granville Milling property; Kyle Cook seconded and the vote was as follows:
AYES: Mark Zolendziewski, Steve Dyer, Kyle Cook, Todd McConnell, Brian Hiebel
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None

Passed 5 - 0

7. Section 1159 Light Manufacturing amendments

a. 1159 Ordinance Draft amendments

Planner Trevor Traphagen said that this started well over fifteen months ago, he provided a summary and said this review began because the existing uses in the Light Manufacturing (LM) zoning district are antiquated, and they don't really allow for the types of businesses that were trying to locate in the industrial park, so he was asked to come up with some ideas that the group could discuss. He said this was an initiative that was started by the Planning and Zoning Commission, this was not based on an application that the city received or direction from city council, it was simply the commission looking out for the future of the city and trying to make the code better. There was review of the recently updated Comprehensive Plan and recommendation to adjust zoning district boundaries as recommended in the plan, meaning some of the properties in the downtown would get rezoned from LM to something else, whatever was deemed appropriate at the time, the same for a couple of parcels that are on the eastern portion of that adjacent to Sportsman Club Road. He said he recommended rezoning those parcels, aligning everything with the comprehensive plan, then at that time updating the zoning standards to allow whatever uses wanted because the zoning would only be applied to those properties that are industrial in nature. Mr. Traphagen said that wasn't appealing to the planning and zoning commission, so they recommended a different path of, if we're going to open the door completely, to added uses, let's have a better understanding by having the city do some sort of traffic study to understand how much the volume of traffic would be, the types of trucks, and what that would mean specifically for the intersection of 37 and 62 in the downtown. He said this was all about the time that the intersection study for 37 and 62 had been released, there were more accurate traffic counts and it was pretty obvious that there was not a lot of excess capacity in that intersection. He said that the P&Z at the time was not comfortable just recommending a traffic study to city council, so his recommendation was, if they want to try and kind of take a peek through the door but not fully open it, they could put some limitations on what properties were allowed to have these expanded uses; frontage on certain roads, minimum lot sizes, things like that. That's how they arrived at the ordinance that was initially recommended for approval to council, in that it's just the properties on Commerce Boulevard and 62, that have a certain lot size, that are able to utilize these expanded set of uses. He said his one critique of where we're at is that while there is a traffic study requirement for any new development, the code as proposed doesn't do a great job of setting up how those traffic studies are utilized. Mr. Traphagen said that what would help him, is clarification on why City Council returned the recommended Ordinance draft back to the Planning & Zoning Commission, so he would like to hear from this board and what was discussed at the last meeting.

Mark Zolendziewski said the main point is the two parcels with frontage on Sportsman Club Road, those were not included, along with Endeavor Court. He said the Comprehensive Plan calls those out as residential, which of course they can't force upon the landowners because it is not currently zoned as such and the owners don't have that intention because it is more marketable as Light Manufacturing. So now they are looking to encompass those lots and what do they do for Sportsman Club Road that doesn't cause fifty curb cuts on it and can they limit that. Also taking into account Endeavor Court and the development that is currently over there at Concord Crossing, and not putting a fifty-foot-tall building in somebody's backyard. Chairman Dyer said that they did send this to City

Council for approval, ultimately they sent it back and the reason is a little unclear.

Trevor Traphagen said the reason they went this way (to exclude Sportsman Club Road and Endeavor Court) was because most of what is built out in the industrial park is already along Commerce Boulevard or has direct access to Commerce Boulevard, some of them are vacant or aren't fully leased out and so maybe could be better utilized. But at least that way it was an incremental approach of let's try this first and if we have problems in a few years then maybe we know not to do anything additional, like open that door any further. He said initially there wasn't the will of the P&Z to recommend rezoning some of those parcels or to conduct a larger traffic study to understand, regardless, whether it's industrial or residential use, what does that do for some of the other intersections throughout the city. Discussion on having a traffic study requirement in the code; Mr. Traphagen said it's one thing to require a traffic study but unless the city has some sort of mechanism or some sort of code or even policy in place of how the findings of those studies are addressed, let's say that you have five parcels that are being built and the last guy in the door all of a sudden trips the threshold that you need a new intersection upgrade and a traffic signal. Is the last guy in the door paying for all of that or are the five people that actually created the problem paying for it or is it just the city paying for it? That's the issue with having something like that in the code, without having some stipulations as to how those things are addressed. Meaning, what's the share of the burden of the city? What's the share of the burden for the developer? He said he thinks those sorts of things need to be flushed out given the fact that we know there's constraints already present in the transportation network in the city. Discussion on listing streets or just allowing all uses in all of LM. Mr. Traphagen said that it was originally relayed to him that the preference would be just to try and have those location criteria in the code as a way to incrementally allow some change to happen in those existing buildings within the industrial park primarily, but not fully open the door to allow anything anywhere within that industrial park.

After discussion, the commission opened to public comments:

1. Justin Fox

- With Underhill & Hodge, representing the Johnson family. They appreciate the discussion tonight, he thinks they are making some progress. He said they have been engaged in this dialogue because they would like these additional permitted uses to apply to the Sportsman Club Road Light Manufacturing parcels. When this went to Council, they attended the meeting and requested that it get a second look at including Sportsman Club Road.
- When this ground was originally annexed at the request of Johnstown in 2014, it was brought into the Light Manufacturing district. The goal or the intent as it was conveyed to the property owners at that time was to become a part of the industrial park on Commerce Boulevard which then allowed it to receive the Light Manufacturing designation. He thinks the current approach is a good one, it's a solution to a problem that doesn't require a complete rezoning. Including Sportsman's Club Road gives access and gives opportunity to the city for expanded permitted uses for industrial development in those areas, which is certainly what the two property owners here tonight would like to see.
- He thinks there are ways to restrict the curb cuts or access points, he has relayed some information to Trevor. He thinks that the Licking County Access Management Plan probably applies to this, he thinks it's a county road which is a major artery or a major collector which actually limits the amount of curb cuts. That would limit curb

cuts to every 400 feet under the access management plan and even if those parcels were split in the future that would not trump the access management plan, so there are some protections that exist from the county in his opinion.

- Said Trevor mentioned development agreements and negotiations with the city, Mr. Fox said his interpretation of this text is that the traffic study would be required for any 20,000 square foot or greater development in the LM district that would be included in these new uses, which they would hope would be Sportsman Club road. They would create a dialogue where the access management plan will be provided to the city and there would be a negotiation or a discussion about what improvements are necessary. He thinks ultimately any developer is going to want to engage in that because traffic and access are going to be important to any end use there. He said he thinks that the real question is do they want Sportsman Club Road in this text. He said he believes the text as it's drafted, with the traffic studies, probably creates a scenario where anyone who is going to develop on that property, if they have these additional permitted uses, is in here engaging in a dialogue with the city about what needs to be done to improve those roadways, who pays for it, and it can be done on kind of project by project basis.
- For reference, there are two parcels, Mr. Johnson's parcel is sixty acres. It's got about 1,200 feet of frontage; under the access management plan, that would be three curb cuts that the county would allow on that parcel in particular.

Mr. Zolendziewski said that if Sportsman Club Road is added, what is the five-year plan for these two properties. Mr. Fox said that with the additional permitted uses, development is far more likely, he does not have a timeline or site plans, but there has been a lot of interest in those parcels, however usually on review of the LM text the interest dies. This does open the door to allow people to come in and bring their consultants and their engineers to really study these sites and see what makes sense there. Mr. Johnson shared some history on their annexation to the city. Mr. Fox reiterated that they want these additional uses to apply to the parcels on Sportsman Club Road.

2. Alan Benton

- He bought the property many years ago, Jim Lenner was the City Manager and Bailey was the planner.
- He is an industrial person who owns three factories in Heath and Hebron, they were excited about him buying the property because he was going to put in a plant, they gave him a quote for the cost of running water and sewage. But he is going to build his next plant on some property he has in Heath because everything out here has really changed. The issue he has with everything is when you have different people here at the city, the uses all change and what you're required to do on that property. So, you're talking about the property that's in the comprehensive plan. Said he has 82 acres next to that, that's not in the city. They want to do that in housing too and that's not going to happen because he owns the blue house that's on the hill there and his children are looking to build their homes on that 82 acres. When you say that the land will be developed, he doesn't know what's going to happen to the land, he has no intention of selling it, no one has approached him to buy the land. All he's trying to do is be consistent and has a real problem with every time everybody changes the rules kind of change. If he had known that the property was not intended to be light industrial, he would not have bought it. When asked what he is doing with the property, he has no idea, they might sell it, he doesn't know what

Johnstown will look like five or ten years from now. There is development in Utica, and all that traffic is going to come through Johnstown, there is a problem and the city does not control places outside of Johnstown. He appreciates their work and taking the time to really study this, right now the property is useless other than farming. He wants it to stay Light Manufacturing and whatever we are doing as a city, he would like it to be consistent going forward.

3. Donny Barnard

- Agrees the zoning needs to be updated, but thinks they are putting the cart before the horse, he really believes that any changes they make to this zoning, is going to impact the 5,000 or 6,000 residents of Johnstown because of the traffic issues, traffic is already a huge issue. His question is, can they make a recommendation to council to have a traffic study done of that whole corridor to determine what information we have and know before we make these changes instead of making these changes then having a traffic study when a new developer wants to come here so we have the full picture to know what to do in the future.

Trevor Traphagen said the answer to that is yes, but will caveat that by saying just like these gentlemen don't know exactly what will be built on these properties, a traffic study won't have every answer either. So ultimately, they will get a range out of that, it won't be expect X number of trips and it's going to be an exact number because that's just not the way those studies work. He says yes, he can certainly recommend that, but know that it won't ever be like a crystal ball of saying yes, you can approve this or no, you can't from a traffic standpoint. But he thinks it would greatly benefit the city because even as part of the other traffic study that was done as part of the 37/62 interchange, they were already exploring ideas like connecting Leafy Dell down to 62 and so a traffic study along that corridor of 62 and Sportsman Club would have a better idea of if you do this, meaning let's say you expand all these uses on Sportsman Club, you should also be prepared to Y over here somewhere else that may be seemingly unrelated but that's where the bottleneck appears. So he said yes, they can certainly recommend that and that would make this decision likely easier down the road because everyone including himself would have an expectation as to what the impacts will be downstream, not just all right, we're going to make these changes and hope for the best.

- Mr. Barnard said he is a data driven person and likes to have the data and likes the idea of limiting curb cuts but if even if you limit the curb cuts you could have one curb cut to one issue or one place there that could result in fifty tractor trailers there a day going in that one spot even though you have that one curb cut. So while limiting the curb cuts is helpful, he is not sure it's helpful for the rest of the city. He thinks it's just an awful spot, just for the fact that it's right next to the downtown. If they could get the data to make the correct decision, to him that would be the best thing possible.

Explanation for newer members and discussion on the TID traffic study of the SR 37 and US 62 intersection. Mark Zolendziewski said that many properties just north on US 62 outside of city limits could develop, do we then limit ourselves and not bring business into Johnstown because of traffic? Traffic is going to be a problem everywhere, no matter what we do. He said he thinks we end up severely limiting ourselves in pushing businesses

outside of the city when we could garner them into the city and bring more tax revenue to the city. Discussion on a recommendation to council and how best to express their concerns. Kyle Cook said he recommends adding Sportsman Club Road and Endeavor Court to the text, move it up to council with a recommendation to do a traffic study. Mr. Zolendziewski said while a traffic study will give them data, at this point he thinks it is a waste of money, there are so many different uses that could go in. Some further discussion on curb cuts; Trevor Traphagen said if the only edit is adding Sportsman Club Road and Endeavor Court, that can be made clearly enough in a motion that he can adjust the language, but he is not sold that through the zoning code the curb cuts can be adjusted, he would want to research that before sending anything to city council. Kyle Cook said he looks at this as an opportunity to bring in more business and taxes, he does worry about the traffic, but with the reported eighty percent of the traffic not starting or stopping in Johnstown, the problem isn't necessarily our current businesses and people that live here, it is everyone outside of it.

ACTION: Kyle Cook moved to recommend to council approval of the LM Chapter 1159 draft adding Sportsman Club Road & Endeavor Court; Mark Zolendziewski seconded and the vote was as follows:
AYES: Kyle Cook, Todd McConnell, Brian Hiebel, Mark Zolendziewski
NOES: Steve Dyer
ABSTAIN: None

Passed 4 - 1

The draft will return to council for consideration.

8. Other Business - None

9. Adjourn

ACTION: Steve Dyer moved to adjourn; Brian Hiebel seconded and all were in favor.
AYES: Steve Dyer, Kyle Cook, Mark Zolendziewski, Brian Hiebel, Todd McConnell
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None

Passed 5 - 0

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.