MEDINA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

144 North Broadway Street • Suite 113 • Medina, Ohio 44256
Phone: 330-722-9293 • **Toll Free:** 844-722-3800
Website: medinaco.org/planning

MEDINA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2025, 6:30 P.M.

Guests:
Frank Baluch, Litchfield Zoning Chair
Chris Barnes, Litchfield Zoning Board
David Borling, Litchfield Board of Zoning Appeals
Joe Burgoon, Lewis Land Professionals
Steve and Laurie Runyon, Sharon Ridge LLC
Ben Weinerman, Pride One

MCDPS Staff:
Cheryl Heinly, Administrative Assistant
Denise Testa, Director

Board President Jeff Brandon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

MCPC Members:
Sally Albrecht
Jeff Brandon
David Gilson
Pat Ryan
Chet Simmons

MCPC Alternates:
Rick Dumperth (alternate for Steve Hambley)
Cindy Engleman (alternate for Colleen Swedyk)
Tom James (alternate for Aaron Harrison)
Chris Kalina (alternate for Chuck Johnson)

II. MINUTES

Board President Brandon asked if there were any questions or comments on the November 5, 2025, minutes.

Board Member Albrecht moved to approve the November 5, 2025 minutes as written. Board Member Ryan seconded the motion. All other members voted AYE and the motion was approved.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items for Correspondence.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no items on Consent Calendar.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. **Rick Dumperth Introduction**

The Chair began this section by saying they do have some old business. He then turned his attention to welcoming their newest member, Rick Dumperth, to the commission.

The Chair explained Rick's role, saying Rick was going to be Steve Hambley's alternate for next year. Rick confirmed adding for the foreseeable future. The Chair continued with warm words welcoming him and saying he thought everybody knows Rick is a Chatham Township Trustee and very involved within the community. Board President Brandon asked new Board Member Dumperth if he had anything he wanted to say tonight or had any questions. Rick responded graciously saying he knew most of them and appreciated the opportunity.

b. **Walnut Ridge Estates Corrected Preliminary Plan with Street Stub**

Ms. Testa presented the above Corrected Preliminary Plan to the Commission. She made it clear that there would not be a vote on this and no action is required as the Board has already approved the preliminary plan for Walnut Ridge. Director Testa just wanted to update them on recent developments.

She explained the updates saying one with the street stub that the applicant has installed and designed as part of their subdivision. She said they have included their street stub as well as added two additional sublots.

Director Testa then introduced a related development saying once that project was submitted, the Planning office then received the 7712 Ridge project to the south, which as the Board can see, there is not a connection at this time. However, the concept plan for 7712 will be reviewed December 17, and staff's goal is to work with 7712 Ridge to design their subdivision and connect with Walnut Ridge to the north.

She added an important update about agency comments saying she did send a request for comments to Planning commenting agencies. And at this point, the agencies have indicated their comments have not changed from the original Preliminary Plan that staff reviewed last month.

The Chair asked if there were any questions from the commission for Ms. Testa on this matter, noting that she is still in the process of working on it.

When Board President Brandon mentioned the applicant was present and asked if they would like to add anything, the applicant, Lauri Runyon declined, saying she had no comment.

c. **Lafayette Township Map Amendment**

The Chair moved to the final old business item and this would be the Lafayette Township map amendment.

Director Testa provided the update reminding the Board that this is also a point of information for them and no action is required. She let them know that the township trustees disapproved the map amendment for the 78 plus acres from LMRD to Rural Residential.

Director Testa concluded wanting to update the Commission as there was much discussion, and she knew the Board included much feedback regarding this map amendment.

The Chair responded saying he remembered that meeting and thanked Ms. Testa for the update.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Estates at Ridgemont Replat No. 3**, Hinckley Township, 085-2025 R

Ms. Testa presented the above staff report to the Commission.

Discussion:

Board President Brandon asked if there were any comments or questions.

Joe Burgoon from Lewis Land Professionals, confirmed they had the soil evaluations and would get that over to the Planning staff.

Board Member Engleman, a Hinckley township trustee, said it meets all requirements.

Board Member Ryan raised a question about the frontage for the existing home on Ridgemont and if that is considered their front yard. She asked if they have enough frontage on Ridgemont as she did not look up what the requirement was.

Board Member Engleman reassured Board Member Ryan that the zoning inspector had verified that information.

Board Member James moved to approve the staff recommendation of Approval with Modifications for the Estates at Ridgemont Replat No. 3. Board Member Simmons

seconded the motion. Board Member Engleman abstained. All other members voted AYE and the motion was approved.

b. **Litchfield Township Text Amendment,** 083-2025 TA

Ms. Testa presented the above staff report to the Commission.

Discussion:

Board President Brandon asked if there were any comments or questions.

Director Testa opened her presentation with brief housekeeping remarks regarding the new staff report format. She noted that copies of the Litchfield Township Zoning Resolution were available for reference. She explained that staff revised the format to improve efficiency, as prior reports for text amendments required excessive time spent on formatting rather than substantive review.

Director Testa requested feedback from the Commission on the new format, noting that comments could be provided during the meeting or by email. She explained that staff comments are now embedded directly in the report and accompanied by the full zoning resolution.

She further explained that tracked or redlined changes were not provided because the zoning resolution is a complete rewrite. For future text amendments, staff intends to provide marked-up versions. She added that staff believes the revised approach, including a shorter staff report, is more efficient than producing a significantly longer document.

Board President Brandon noted the strong showing from Litchfield asking if anyone here representing Litchfield would like to speak regarding this amendment.

Frank Beluch from Litchfield explained their consultant situation as he was getting ready to retire, so they decided to finish the document. He said there was a lot of guidance on Mark's (consultant) part, getting it together. He said they just tidied everything up at the end and read through it a couple of times. They just wanted to make it a little bit easier to read and a lot more uniform across the board.

Chris Barnes from the zoning board thought the majority was a lot of cross referencing, going to one section and then back to another section. He said they wanted to change it and make it more table friendly, more easily accessible and then obviously make specifics to know, any business coming in, they wanted to narrow down less questions later on.

Frank Baluch clarified that their consultant was Mark Majewski. Board Member Ryan complimented the work and said she has worked with Mr. Majewski several times. She said it looks like a very nice draft and it is easy to read and also liked the charts. Mr. Baluch elaborated on the challenges they faced and said that originally, it was too much

going back between all of the different sections and there were a lot of discrepancies that they found and different articles.

Dave Borling added it was easy because prior to this endeavor it took five years just to do amendments to that resolution that got codified in 2018, and they had to go through this whole process doing just amendments having all the red lines and they appreciated not having to do that.

Board Member Dumperth questioned the frontage in section 301 on page 4 (of the staff report) and of the frontage setback maximum of 1500 feet saying that it would be unusually large and what is the standard. After some discussion back and forth, Chris Barnes thought the 1500 feet was specific to a rear or flag lot and said they would clear that language up. Board Member Dumperth liked the tables and images that the township used.

Board Member Kalina offered substantial advice about similar use language and suggested reading Hinckley's zoning resolution. He said the staff pointed out that, similar or substantially similar, uses, those do come in handy. He explained Hinckley's approach saying how they set up because they give that authority to the zoning commission to make that determination, not the BZA. And the zoning commission who knows the resolution well can make that determination on if they feel that that use is in fact similar.

Board Member Engleman moved to approve the staff recommendation of Approval with Modifications for the Litchfield Township Text Amendment. Board Member Dumperth seconded the motion. All members voted AYE and the motion was approved.

Board Member Kalina congratulated all of them on the work they did. He said it looks like they did a great job and thanked them all for attending as well. Rarely does the Board see a majority of a zoning board attend one of our meetings to come see the planning commission. He said that shows how passionate they are about doing the right thing for their community.

Board Member Engleman let Director Testa know that she liked the presentation format better as it was very easy to read and by including the resolution itself she could go back and forth.

VII. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Planning Director Testa distributed materials related to the Valley Ridge Estates concept plan previously reviewed on November 19. She described the project as a 172-acre subdivision located west of Valley City on Center Road, consisting of 143 sublots. She noted that the project combines elements of the original Valley Ridge Estates proposal and the Miller Custom Farms/Stonegate Preserve concept plans. The

project had been scheduled for review earlier in the year but was withdrawn prior to consideration due to unforeseen circumstances.

Director Testa outlined next steps, explaining that the applicant must obtain a conditional use permit for the conservation district and demonstrate compliance with zoning requirements related to density and open space.

She provided a staff update for December, noting that two concept plans are under review: 7712 Ridge Road in Sharon Township and Cobblestone Park in Montville Township. She noted that a VA clinic is proposed at Cobblestone Park Drive and Wooster Pike (State Route 3), near the planned roundabout.

Looking ahead to January, Director Testa reported that the agenda is expected to include a replat in York Township, a replat in Sharon Township, and a new preliminary plan submission for the Highlands of Sharon to restart its review timeline. Director Testa discussed upcoming zoning text amendments using the new staff report format, noting anticipated amendments from Homer, Hinckley, and Harrisville Townships. She stated that the January agenda is expected to include seven items.

She also provided an update on zoning workshops, indicating that workshops will continue next year, beginning in February with zoning board basics. Additional topics under consideration include agricultural zoning, data centers, and legislative updates. She invited Board members to suggest additional workshop topics.

Director Testa reported that staff plans to apply for the PY26 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG/CHIP), with applications to be issued to townships, villages, and nonprofits and due to the County in June 2026. She also noted that staff continues to review subdivision regulations and is meeting with a consultant, American Structurepoint.

An update was provided on the Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) grant application. Director Testa stated that staff is awaiting a decision from the state on the $1.4 million application submitted in partnership with the three cities.

Director Testa also reported that the Fairgrounds Strategic Facilities Plan is progressing, with a draft review meeting scheduled with the consultant and fairgrounds representatives, followed by a presentation to the Fairgrounds Board.

In response to a procedural question, Director Testa confirmed that concept plans and related meetings are public and that the Planning Commission does not take formal action on concept plans. She noted that staff shares concept plans with the Board to provide advance notice of upcoming projects.

Regarding Valley Ridge Estates, Director Testa explained that sublot sizes are smaller due to the conservation development approach, which allows increased open space and environmental preservation. She noted that three developers are collaborating under a developer's agreement to construct the project. She also explained that access to State

Route 303 will require ODOT approval and that collaboration among the developers reduces the number of access points.

Director Testa discussed challenges related to alternative access routes and infrastructure constraints in Valley City. She concluded by expressing optimism about the project and indicated that staff hopes the township will approve the conditional use permit.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no Public Participation.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no Other Business.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Board President Brandon thanked everyone for their participation in the extensive agenda.

There being no further business to discuss, Board Member Albrecht motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Board Member Ryan seconded the motion. All members voted AYE and the motion was approved.

Jeff Brandon, President

Cheryl Heinly, Administrative Assistant

Attachment: Valley Ridge Estates Concept Plan