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, MARCH 4, 2026, 6:30 P.M.

Guests:
Nils Johnson, Cunninham and Associates
Alliss Strogin, Medina Township Zoning
Jeff Stroup, Sharon Township Zoning Inspector
Ben Weinerman, Villas at Hidden Lake Ph. 1 LLC

MCDPS Staff:
Cheryl Heinly, Administrative Assistant
Jeff Kassouf, Planner
Denise Testa, Director

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

I. ROLL CALL

MCPC Members:
Sally Albrecht
Jeff Brandon
David Gilson
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 questions or comments about the February 4, 2026, minutes.

Board Member Dumperth moved to approve February 4, 2026 minutes as written. Board Member Engleman seconded the motion. All members voted AYE and the motion was approved.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items for Correspondence.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no items on the Consent Calendar.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. **Highlands of Sharon**, Geotechnical Report Peer Review

Director Testa provided a comprehensive update on the Highlands of Sharon project. She explained that in January 2026, a preliminary plan was presented and approved with modifications, including proposed 22 sublots terminating in a cul-de-sac on the existing Ledge Stone Drive. The approval was contingent upon completion of a peer review report and the planning commission's consideration of its findings and recommendations.

Director Testa displayed maps showing the location of the mine boundaries, with hatching indicating the mine area. She explained that the left map showed where borings were created for the geotechnical report from Wertz, while the right map showed the ODNR mines of Ohio exhibit, with yellow portions indicating known mines and orange portions indicating partially known mines. The westernmost mine was the one of concern for the Highlands of Sharon project.

The CTL peer review report agreed with the Wertz report findings. However, CTL indicated that if construction is not performed within 100 feet of the eastern limits of the mine workings shown on the ODNR exhibit, it was their opinion that the mine workings would not be close enough to impact the site with any potential angle of draw from mine subsidence. Their recommendation was to have no construction within 100 feet of the eastern limits of the mine.

Board President Brandon opened the discussion by noting that CTL essentially reviewed existing data without conducting additional borings. He observed that boring number 6 had a tool drop of 6 inches, which could indicate fractures or joints within bedrock rather than necessarily being in a cavity. He expressed concern about building on known mine areas.

Rick Dumperth questioned whether property owners could obtain homeowner's insurance if they didn't abide by the hundred-foot setback. Ms. Testa confirmed that mine subsidence insurance was available for purchase.

Engineer Nils Johnson, representing the applicant, addressed the Commission. He explained that Wertz's conclusion was that the area highlighted in blue, essentially east of the borings, was very low risk for mine subsidence impacts. Mr. Johnson noted that CTL generally agreed with Wertz's conclusion, stating that the portion of the site east of the Wertz borings had an extremely low probability of mine subsidence impacts. He emphasized that CTL did not believe additional drilling was required to evaluate potential mine subsidence east of the Wertz borings.

Mr. Johnson expressed concern about the hundred-foot setback recommendation, noting that different maps from ODNR had been inconsistent over time. He questioned which map they were referring to and how accurate it was, suggesting that more weight should be given to the actual physical evidence from soil borings rather than historical maps.

Director Testa clarified that CTL was referring to the ODNR exhibit to establish the 100-foot setbacks, though she acknowledged that ODNR maps of abandoned mine locations are not definitive.

The discussion continued with Board Member Chris Kalina referencing a mine collapse that occurred in 2017 on Salwa Lane at the border of Sharon and Wadsworth, where three condos and a house were declared uninhabitable. Testa confirmed this incident and noted that mine subsidence insurance had been available for about $25 per year at that time, though prices had likely increased.

Johnson mentioned that a condition of the previous approval was to recommend that homeowners carry mine subsidence insurance as a precaution, which had already been agreed upon.

The Chair proposed a motion to amend the January 7, 2026 approval with modifications, requiring that construction within phase 3 maintain a minimum hundred-foot setback from the eastern limits of the mine workings as shown on the ODNR exhibit and the submitted January 2026 preliminary plan survey. The motion would also require that the location of the underground mine and corresponding no-build zone be correctly delineated and labeled on the replat.

Board Member Kalina moved to approve the motion made by the Chair and it was seconded by Board Member Engleman. However, during discussion, Nils Johnson expressed concerns about the limits of the ODNR mine exhibit and requested a chance to review where that information came from and how it had been overlaid onto the property. He was not comfortable with the accuracy of the information and suggested they needed discussion with CTL to understand why they added the hundred-foot setback recommendation in the middle of their report but didn't focus on it in their conclusion.

Mr. Johnson was concerned that if the Planning Commission modified their approval, it could potentially eliminate 3 or 4 lots, and he preferred to table the matter to look into these concerns further. After discussion about the specific mapping and exhibits referenced, *Board Member Kalina withdrew his motion to allow the applicant time for additional due diligence and Board Member Engleman seconded the withdrawal.* The matter was tabled for further review.

*Board President Brandon and Board Member Albrecht abstained from the following agenda item as they both are trustees for Montville township, 6:57 p.m.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Hillsong**, Revised Preliminary Plan, Montville Township, 009-2026 RPP

Ms. Testa presented the above staff report to the Commission. She also handed out an addendum which included information from Paul Jeffers, who indicated that the subdivision had satisfied all conditions determined by the Township Zoning Commission except for section 550.1b regarding capped gas and oil wells minimum 50-foot setback. The applicant had a variance request scheduled for March 12 (16).

Discussion:

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

Director Testa distributed an addendum and presented the Hillsong revised preliminary plan. The proposal would increase the number of sublots from 114 to 141, extending Fortune's Trail to the east and north and terminating in a permanent cul-de-sac. The plan also included constructing Janine Lane connecting from Hillsong leading to the north, creating 26 acres of open space, and one block for future development in the northern portion called O'Hara Drive.

The applicant, Mr. Valore, briefly addressed the Commission, explaining that they had eliminated townhomes from the original plan and created a 50-foot setback from the back of lots on the west side to Montville Drive that would be mounded and landscaped. He described it as a better plan more conducive to how the land lays.

Board Member Dumperth moved to approve the staff recommendation of Approval with Modifications for the Hillsong Revised Preliminary Plan. Board Member James seconded the motion. Board President Brandon and Board Member Albrecht abstained. All other members voted AYE and the motion was approved.

b. **Bohaty**, Planned Development Plan, Replat No. 1, Medina Township, 012-2026 RPP

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

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

Ben Weinerman, Pride One, said he would be happy to answer any questions. Board President Brandon questioned if these would be rentals. Mr. Weinerman confirmed that these would be rentals and described the product as predominantly ranch attached units with some townhome units. The buildings would range from two to six units attached, with a total of 97 units planned.

Rick Dumperth asked about the multi-family structure, and Mr. Weinerman clarified that most buildings would have up to six attached units but would range from two to six units per building.

Township representative Alliss Strogin spoke in support of the project, explaining that the site plan being used was approved a couple of years ago for another developer who had gone through the approval process. She noted that the township was happy with the plan and found it somewhat humorous that residents had previously complained about the site needing cleanup but were now complaining about development. The township supported the recommendation for approval.

Board Member Gilson moved to approve the staff recommendation of Approval with Modifications for the Bohaty Planned Development Plan Replat No. 1. Board Member Simmons seconded the motion. All voted AYE and the motion was approved.

c. **Guilford Township Text Amendment,** 013-2026 TA

Mr. Kassouf presented the above staff report to the Commission.

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

Kassouf made several technical recommendations including clarifying language for accessory buildings, ensuring consistent terminology, and recommending citation of appropriate ORC sections. He also questioned whether "1,00 feet" was meant to be 100 or 1000 feet in section 9.

Julie Carr, the zoning inspector/secretary for Guilford Township, explained the reasoning behind eliminating in-law suites. She described how in-law suites created confusion about whether they constituted additions or separate dwellings, particularly when front doors were added. The township decided to simplify by requiring property owners to choose between doing an addition or creating a second dwelling.

Carr also explained the change from having all site plans go through the zoning commission to having permitted uses reviewed by the zoning inspector, based on the Prosecutor's recommendation that the zoning commission, not being a judicial body, shouldn't vote on matters that could have legal standing in court.

Rick Dumperth asked about the elimination of in-law suites and whether the key factor was common entry. Carr explained that most in-law suites she had processed were essentially additions, with some having front doors added, which created ambiguity about whether they constituted second dwellings.

Regarding the "1,00 feet" question, there was discussion about whether it should be 100 or 1000 feet, with the consensus being it was likely meant to be 100 feet, but the township would clarify the language.

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

VII. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Testa provided updates on several ongoing initiatives:

Subdivision Regulations and Development Agreement Review: The department had been meeting with consultant American Structure Point, who completed an initial review of subdivision regulations and supporting regulations from the county engineer's office and sanitary engineer to identify potential gaps and conflicts. Stakeholder meetings with realtors, brokers, designers, property owners, county staff, and townships were scheduled for March 11th and 12th. American StructurePoint would present a virtual presentation at the April Planning Commission meeting.

Upcoming Meetings: The April meeting would include Sharon and Harrisville Township text amendments, Cobblestone Park replat, and the American StructurePoint presentation. The March concept plan meeting would review a Beach Road subdivision in Sharon Township north of the railroad tracks.

Grant Programs: Community Development Block Grant applications were now available, with a public hearing scheduled for the following Tuesday and an information session on March 24th. The Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program (CHIP) was moving forward with Colleen having digitally signed the grant agreement.

Ohio Department of Agriculture Land Use Planning Grant: Testa thanked those who supported the grant application and attended the February 19th meeting or submitted letters of support. They received 22 letters of support within six days, demonstrating county collaboration. The grant decision would be announced on March 31st.

Planning Workshops: Planner Jeff Kassouf detailed the upcoming workshop series. The first workshop on March 24th at 6 PM would cover zoning board basics for new township and county staff, moderated by Denise Testa and Jeff Brandon. Additional workshops would be held monthly covering topics including data centers (April), short-term rentals (May), comprehensive plan updates (June), legislative review, and nuisance properties (August). The workshops would be held in the county building's balcony room B from 6-8 PM and would include Q&A sessions with expert speakers.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Tom Sours provided extensive commentary on coal mine mapping and surveying. As a licensed engineer and surveyor who grew up adjacent to the Highlands of Sharon property, he shared his expertise on the accuracy of historical mine maps. He explained that coal seams were typically 3-5 feet high and would have been surveyed over a century ago using chains, compasses, and primitive lighting. He emphasized

that original survey measurements were imprecise and that transferring information from century-old paper maps to modern maps introduced additional inaccuracies.

Mr. Sours concluded that ODNR maps should only be used to indicate that mining probably occurred in marked areas, but modern drilling and measurement techniques like those used by Wertz were exponentially more accurate. He respectfully suggested the Commission rely on modern geotechnical data rather than century-old mapping information. He also shared local legend about twelve miners who may have been trapped when a mine flooded after hitting a spring, though he couldn't verify this story.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no Other Business.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Board President Brandon adjourned the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Jeff Brandon, President

Cheryl Heinly, Administrative Assistant

Attachments: Hillsong Revised Preliminary Plan Addendum

Revised Preliminary Plan

Hillsong

Montville Township

Meeting:	March 4, 2026	**Site Area:**	50.58 acres
App. No.:	009-2026 RPP	**Units:**	141
Applicant:	Valore Builders	**Zoning:**	R-3 Planning Residential, PRD
Developer:	Valore Builders	**Utilities:**	Central Water and Sanitary Sewer
Engineer:	Cunningham & Assoc, Inc.	**School:**	Medina City
Parcels:	030-11B-10-037	**Reviewer:**	Denise Testa

ADDENDUM

The site is located south of Medina Road (SR18) and O'Hara Drive, west of Windfall Road and east of Montville Drive. The Revised Preliminary Plan increases the number of sublots from 114 to 141, extends private street Fortune Trail terminating into a permanent cul-de-sac to the north, and creates private street Janine Lane. Sublots 1-44 have been platted. The staff recommendation of Approval with Modifications remains unchanged.

Paul Jeffers: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL
Montville Township
zoning@montvilletwp.org
330-725-8313

The subdivision has satisfied all conditions determined by the Township Zoning Commission with the exception of Chapter 550.1B – Capped gas/oil wells.