

Liberty Township Adams County  
39 Topper Road Fairfield, Pa 17320  
Planning Commission Monthly Meeting

August 18, 2026

The Planning Commission of Liberty Township, Adams County, met on August 18th, at 6.30 p.m. in the Liberty Municipal Building, 39 Topper Road.  
The meeting was streamed on YouTube.

**Present:** Chair: Rich Luquette; Vice-Chair: Luther Ridge; Secretary: Beatrice Bowman; Ken Farabaugh; Dominic Picarelli, KPI.

**Not present:** Sheri Kipe.

**Attendees:** Principal County Planner: Robert Thaeler; Supervisor: Chris Hill; Cindy McGrew: CEO Operation Second Chance; Tex Miller: Operation Second Chance.

Rich Luquette called the meeting to order at 6.30 p.m.

**Minutes:** Ken Farabaugh motioned to approve the minutes conditional on correction  
“....motion to *recommend to the Supervisors* to adopt...”  
Luther Ridge seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

**Chair comments:**

Rich Luquette noted that he represented Liberty Township at the Southwest Joint Comprehensive Plan meeting July 22nd, 2026.

**Public comments:** There were no public comments.

**Old business**

**a. Southwest Joint Comprehensive Plan.**

Robert Thaeler explained that all 6 municipalities were represented at the “kick off” meeting, held on July 22nd.

This will be a steering committee, and they discussed the process going forward.

As each issue is addressed, information will be sent out to the various municipalities to review.

The first “slug” is to address existing conditions, focusing on demographics etc.

**b. Review of SALDO and Zoning Ordinances and Provide Recommendations**

There was discussion on this later on in the meeting.

**c. Andrew Mitchell 2785 Bullfrog Rd 25D15-0035---000 Final Division Plan dated 09/25/2025**

Ken Farabaugh motioned to table this. Luther Ridge seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

**d. Final Land development for Operation Second chance 17870 Harbaugh Valley Rd LDP 25B18-0024---000 dated 09/25/2025**

Dominic Picarelli explained that in KPI's letter of August 17th, 2026, he had listed some minor issues that needed to be addressed before approval could be granted. Tex Miller said those items had already been addressed, but there had not been time for the paperwork to go through.

The Board of Supervisors' meeting Sept. 2nd. was noted.

Ken Farabaugh motioned to recommend conditional approval, as long as all issues in KPI's letter of August 17th are met. Luther Ridge seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

**e. Review and Comment on Proposed Zoning ordinance Amendments - Due to BOS by Sept. 2nd.**

**f. I. Retreat Center**

Dominic Picarelli explained that he is proposing adding "Retreat Center" to the Conditional uses within the Conservation District Ordinance.

Rich Luquette stated that it would be logical also to add "Retreat Center" to the Agricultural Rural District Ordinance. Dominic Picarelli made a note of this.

**li. Repeal Conservation by Design**

Rich Luquette introduced the discussion by stating that the proposed zoning ordinance amendment addressing Conservation by Design was withdrawn by the Board of Supervisors. The discussion focused on understanding the potential issues of concern during the pending process to revise the amendment proposal.

Dominic Picarelli explained that he was tasked to rework/reword Conservation by Design, and that he is in the middle of doing that. The goal is not to totally eliminate Conservation by Design, maintaining the adjusted track approach, and dropping down to 3 options from the current 5.

He said he is focusing on strengthening the protections and preservation of agricultural farmland, particularly areas with "Prime Agricultural Soils".

Rich Luquette asked "what is the urgency" considering the reworking of Southwest Joint Comprehensive Plan.

Robert Thaeler expanded on his letter of August 7, 2026.

He and the county planning office do not support a policy of eliminating Conservation by Design.

Referring to the withdrawn amendment, he reiterated that, as worded, the proposed ordinance would have enabled suburban sprawl, with the potential of "McMansions" on

one acre lots, spread out along the roads. The proposed wording had no protection of rural features, and had the potential to change the rural landscape.

He noted that in the reworking of the Southwest Plan, planning techniques could be identified, such as Smart Growth Techniques, with specific recommendations to ensure that rural features are protected.

**Adjournment:**

Ken Farabaugh motioned to adjourn the meeting, Luther Ridge seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.17 p.m.

Barke Samman

9-15-26