

Geauga County Planning Commission

12611 Ravenwood Dr. • Suite #380 • Chardon, OH 44024
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<https://bocc.geauga.oh.gov/departments/planning-commission>

GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

December 9, 2025 REGULAR MEETING

12611 Ravenwood Drive

Conference Room A334, 3rd Floor

7:30 A.M.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes:
 - A. November 13, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of Agenda/Addendum:
5. Financial Report and Approval of Expenses:
6. Other Business:
7. Major Subdivisions to be reviewed:
 - A. Samuel Whiting Allotment
Replat of Sublot 15
Chester Township
Final Plat
 - B. Big Dipper Road Dedication Plat
Bainbridge Township
Preliminary Plan Revised
8. Township Zoning Amendments to be Reviewed:
 - A. Hambden Township
Text Amendment ZC-2025-03
Initiated November 3, 2025
By Zoning Commission
 - B. Claridon Township
Map Amendment Z25-3
Initiated November 24, 2025
By Zoning Commission
9. Director's Report:
10. Correspondence: None

Per Article 4, Section 2 of the Bylaws of the Geauga County Planning Commission,
this agenda is subject to modification.

11. Old Business:

A. NOACA Letter

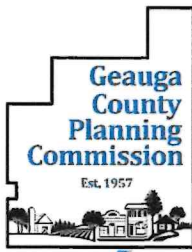
12. New Business:

A. 2026 Meeting Dates Schedule/Calendar

B. Model Zoning Amendments

C. Mining Operations

13. Adjournment



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DECEMBER 9, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Nick Gorris called the December 9, 2025 regular meeting of the Geauga County Planning Commission to order at 7:30 a.m. at 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Suite A334, Chardon, Ohio. A quorum was present. Roll call was taken by Ms. Irizarry, and the following members were present:

2. Roll Call

Members present: Nick Gorris, Phillip Miller, Caterina Cocca-Fulton, Gary Neola, Enzo Perfetto, Alternate Dave Fabig for Commissioner Dvorak, Commissioner Carolyn Brakey, Dennis Bergansky, Jim McCaskey, Matt Johnson and Alternate Walter Claypool for Commissioner Ralph Spidalieri.

Staff present: Linda Crombie (Director), Pamela Irizarry (Administrative Assistant) and Allyson Kobus (Planner II/GIS Coordinator).

Guests: Chris Alusheff, Chester Township Zoning Inspector and Jeff Martin, Industrial Commercial Properties LLC, (ICP) representative.

Ms. Cocca-Fulton arrived at 7:37 a.m.

Mr. Johnson arrived at 7:41 a.m.

Ms. Cocca-Fulton left at 8:38 a.m.

Commissioner Brakey left at 8:46 a.m.

3. Approval of Minutes for the November 13, 2025 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Brakey said she submitted redlined changes to the minutes, which included missed words and verbiage. Chairman Gorris said nothing of substance needed to be changed.

Motion made by Commissioner Brakey to approve the November 13, 2025 regular meeting minutes as amended, and Mr. Bergansky seconded the motion. Mr. McCaskey abstained. The motion passed with ten votes for and one abstention.

4. Approval of Agenda/Addendum Items:

Motion made by Mr. Fabig to approve the agenda as presented and Mr. McCaskey seconded, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Financial Report and Approval of Expenses: (November)

Chairman Gorris asked Ms. Irizarry if there was anything significant on the Financial Report and Ms. Irizarry said for the new workstation, a split payment was needed to cover the cost.

Motion made by Mr. Claypool to approve the financial report and the summary of expenses for November 2025 as submitted. Commissioner Brakey seconded, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Other Business: None

7. Major Subdivisions to be reviewed:

**A. Samuel Whiting Allotment
Replat of Sublot 15
Chester Township
Final Plat**

Ms. Crombie said Lois Wenzel applied to consolidate Sublot 15 of the Samuel Whiting Survey with an existing one (1) acre landlocked parcel located outside of the subdivision on the north side behind her house. An accessory building and the septic system are located on the one-acre parcel. This will create Sublot 15-A which is 1.485 acres; Ms. Wenzel is trying to clear up her estate and Ms. Crombie said since this affects the subdivision boundary, per Ohio Revised Code Section 711.24, any changes must have all sublot owners' consent. Ms. Wenzel was able to obtain signatures from all owners except one. It is believed the neighbor did not give consent due to not understanding the process. Chairman Gorris asked to see the parcel of the neighbor who did not give consent and Ms. Crombie displayed the aerial photo. Mr. Perfetto asked if these lots have two (2) parcel numbers and Ms. Crombie said yes.

Chairman Gorris said this impacts Chester Township zoning. Chris Alusheff, Chester Township's Zoning Inspector, said this helps in clearing up any nonconforming uses. Ms. Crombie said in speaking with the Prosecutor's Office, the board must determine if there is any injurious affect and if not, the remaining signature is not necessary, and it would go through the rest of the normal consolidation process. The board determined there was no injurious affect. Ms. Crombie noted if someone else proposes a similar situation, it will be brought to the board for review first for a determination.

Motion made by Mr. McCaskey to recommend approval of the replat of Sublot 15 in the Samuel Whiting Allotment, creating Sublot 15-A. Mr. Claypool seconded, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**B. Big Dipper Road Dedication Plat
Bainbridge Township
Preliminary Plan Revised**

Ms. Crombie said the Planning Commission approved the preliminary plan and final plat for the Big Dipper Road dedication project in 2021. This permitted the developer to construct the road, utilities, and storm water management. Construction is near completion, and the County Engineer must inspect the road, but the plat was brought back to the Commission due to storm water management, property line changes, removal of block references, and minor adjustments in the road's length and area. The developer withdrew the previous Preliminary Plan and submitted for re-approval.

Ms. Crombie presented a map showing the numerous redevelopments, lots splits, storm water ponds, and future developments. In 2021 both the preliminary plan and final plat showed drainage maintenance district easements (DMD). The County Engineer required the three (3) storm water DMD easements to be removed as this project involves the road dedication only, as there are no sublots to assess the stormwater fee for future maintenance of stormwater basins.

Ms. Crombie said the only comments she received were from Geauga Soil and Water. They had no comments on the Preliminary Road Dedication Plat, but did request conditional approval, with the

understanding that the developer must submit a Declaration of Restrictive Covenants showing the stormwater easement for the stormwater ponds currently along Big Dipper Road to them. Ms. Crombie said this is a temporary situation, as the current developer will sell part of the land to another developer, the area where the stormwater ponds are located. ICP is responsible for the stormwater ponds until the future developer develops their project and incorporates Big Dipper's storm water into their storm water management plans. Mr. Neola asked how close that project is, and Ms. Crombie said it will not be within the next month or so but the developer of the future development submitted draft storm water calculations to Soil and Water so they are working on it. Chairman Gorris said this is where the restrictive covenant comes in as it is a revision to the original plan.

Motion made by Commissioner Brakey to recommend approval of the revised Preliminary Plan for the Big Dipper Road Dedication Plat, conditional upon the developer submitting a Declaration of Restrictive Covenants to Geauga Soil and Water regarding the stormwater easement for the stormwater ponds along Big Dipper Road for review and approval prior to final plat approval. Mr. Neola seconded the motion, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. Township Zoning Amendments to be Reviewed:

A. Hambden Township Text Amendment ZC-2025-03 Initiated November 3, 2025 By Zoning Commission

Ms. Crombie said this amendment impacts Article IV: District Regulations, which is proposing to modify the maximum accessory building area calculation for residential uses.

402.10 Minimum and Maximum Floor Area(B):

Ms. Crombie said the original language reads "the maximum floor area for a permitted accessory building shall be one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet or five hundred (500) square feet per acre, whichever is greater". The proposed language reads one thousand (1,000) square feet per acre.

Ms. Crombie said the Township is relatively rural, and they are receiving requests for larger buildings for storage of items associated with a rural residential lifestyle. The proposed language is permissive as there is no maximum size. She recommends the Township consider establishing a maximum accessory building size. She presented a list of examples of typical square footage such as a three (3) car garage (900 square feet), typical pole building (2,400 square feet), new poultry barn at the fairgrounds (9,000 square feet), new airplane hangar at the airport (12,260 square feet), and a large dairy barn (30,000 square feet). Mr. McCaskey asked if these numbers can be given to the Township to take into consideration.

Ms. Crombie said staff recommends approval with modifications. Chairman Gorris directed Ms. Crombie to include the list of square footages to the Township.

Motion made by Mr. Fabig to recommend approval with modifications, the Hambden Township Text Amendment ZC-2025-03, and seconded by Mr. Claypool, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**B. Claridon Township
Map Amendment Z25-3
Initiated November 24, 2025
By Zoning Commission**

Ms. Crombie said the township submitted a zoning amendment that impacts Article 3: Zoning Districts, Section 302. Ms. Crombie said with the dissolution of Aquilla Village, all 982 parcels are now incorporated into Claridon Township's R-1 district, three (3) acre minimum, which required the Township's zoning map to be updated.

Motion made by Mr. Bergansky to recommend approval of the Claridon Township Map Amendment Z25-3 and seconded by Commissioner Brakey and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. Director's Report:

Ms. Crombie said November had four (4) new building lot proposals submitted. Regarding land use plan updates, Ms. Crombie said staff worked on two (2) chapters of the Thompson Township Land Use.

Ms. Crombie said Ms. Kobus updated the zoning map for Claridon Township and will create the final zoning map. Additionally, after speaking with the Auditor's Office about map amendments, both agreed that Planning Commission will be the main office in charge of creating zoning maps and maintaining the GIS zoning layer moving forward.

Ms. Crombie said staff met with the Director of the Department of Archives to discuss scanning files frequently used by Planning staff since many files are requested to research lot splits, subdivisions, or fulfill a public records request. There would be no charge for the work.

Ms. Crombie showed the board a picture of the new workstation in the Planning Commission office, which was installed at the end of October. Ms. Crombie said there were no significant commercial building projects in the County for November.

Legislative Updates: Ms. Crombie highlighted the House and Senate Bills that affect planning and zoning: HB 361: introduced June 18, 2025: This bill proposes to amend and enact sections of the Ohio Revised Code regarding building inspections, local regulations, and zoning. On November 14, 2025, Local government committee introduced a substitute bill that included requiring townships without zoning and 5,000 + population to adopt zoning. Mr. Claypool said this is overreach on the part of the State. The bill also impacts building inspections and allows for an owner to contract with a third-party private inspector to perform required inspections.

HB 520: introduced October 15, 2025: This bill proposes to establish a Blue Ribbon Commission in each county to review and assess each taxing unit within the county and each county program or department to identify duplication of services and generally to streamline and improve county efficiency and effectiveness. The Commission would include three county commissioners, county auditor, mayor of each municipality, township trustee from each township, and superintendents of school districts.

HB 574: introduced November 5, 2025: This bill would create the Political Subdivision Consolidation Incentive Grant Pilot Program. It would also allow political subdivisions to merge to lessen the number of government entities throughout the state. \$25,000,000 is requested, that would be distributed as a grant to communities that merge.

HB 575: introduced November 5, 2025: This bill would make various changes to the law governing the property of taxation of farmland. It would also require the amount of CAUV savings to be listed on tax bills, adds language that would allow tracts of land that have been idle or fallow due to disaster or state emergency, and other tracts or parcels that serve as an incidental use to the primary agricultural use.

Regarding the monthly work summary, Ms. Crombie said in November there were 33 lot splits, subdivisions, easements, and amendments as compared to October, which had 15. The staff referred to the General Plan one (1) time, regarding Community Facilities.

10. Correspondence: None

11. Old Business:

A. NOACA Letter:

Ms. Crombie said the November 5, 2025 draft letter was prepared by Mr. Neola detailing reasons why Geauga County should no longer be part of NOACA, but it was tabled. Ms. Crombie said her recommendation is for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to consider hiring a consultant to perform an analysis of the options listed, especially in terms of financial impacts. This unbiased assessment would provide the officials with the information necessary to make the best decision for Geauga County.

There was discussion among the board members on why it is in the best interest for Geauga County to leave NOACA, such as the fiscal responsibility to the County, what NOACA does not provide for Geauga County, and the benefits of forming a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) with another county, such as Lake County. Chairman Gorris asked if Lake County was looking to leave NOACA. Mr. Claypool said he spoke with Commissioner Beverage at Lake County, and he said to show them how Lake would benefit from leaving NOACA. Mr. Claypool said Lake County is open to the idea and that the Lake County Prosecutor would look at it. Mr. Claypool said NOACA receives \$35 million. Being an MPO allows them to qualify for other funding through ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation). If we formed our own MPO with Lake County, we could do the same. Mr. Claypool added that we do not culturally fit with Cuyahoga County.

Commissioner Brakey said she does not find the letter persuasive at all, there is nothing describing how Geauga County is hurt by NOACA. She said the letter feels emotional; she would like to see facts and figures to persuade the board to leave NOACA. Mr. Claypool said he is looking at the big dollars. The STBG (Surface Transportation Block Grant) would only be \$1 million or less. He said ODOT can look at the cost model; it shows \$7 million dollars as Geauga County's take away. ODOT puts money into an MPO fund and NOACA decides how it is distributed. Commissioner Brakey said she recommends making the letter more factual and less manifesto.

Mr. Bergansky said if Geauga County is putting in \$10 million dollars, what have we gotten back and who is getting our extra money? He said Cuyahoga County loves wasting money on government programs. If Geauga County puts in \$10 million dollars and receives \$1 million dollars back, if that, those figures are

not good, it is not proportional. Commissioner Brakey said it is proportional to population. Mr. Claypool said there is nothing in the federal code that requires funding to be proportional to population. NOACA decided to make it that way years ago. Mr. Claypool said NOACA recently voted to fund high density housing and VibrantNEO is forcing us into higher density housing like in Cleveland. That is not their responsibility.

Commissioner Brakey said the Commissioners' names should be taken off the last page of the letter. She said she would be essentially signing a letter to herself. Ms. Cocca-Fulton said if you are refusing to sign, she understands why, but you are part of the board, and you can abstain. We need to review the options presented and decide if the vision of NOACA aligns with what is best for Geauga County. We must identify the hard facts and the fiscal responsibility to see what goes into NOACA and what benefits Geauga County. Commissioner Brakey said to add an exhibit like the spreadsheet Mr. Claypool described by ODOT. Ms. Crombie said this is why she recommends hiring a consultant to look at it objectively.

Mr. Claypool felt a consultant was not necessary. He said he will contact ODOT to get an updated spreadsheet to confirm the dollars, show the federal code, and an interpretation of the law which he will send to the Planning Director. Mr. Neola said he likes the idea of updating the letter and adding an exhibit to show the actual numbers for the BOCC and why the board should act on this. Commissioner Brakey said show the BOCC how NOACA has harmed Geauga County and not just by talking about diversity. Mr. Claypool said diversity is used to redirect more money to areas of poverty. The phrase "areas of persistent poverty" is now used. It is subtle, but NOACA has harmed us. It is used to influence HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development), ODOT, and EPA (Environmental Protection Agency).

Commissioner Brakey said she would like to table the NOACA draft letter. Chairman Gorris said more information needs to be added. It was agreed that Mr. Neola and Mr. Claypool will work on the letter.

Motion made by Commissioner Brakey to table the NOACA draft letter and seconded by Mr. Fabig, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

12. New Business:

A. 2026 Meeting Dates Schedule/Calendar:

Ms. Crombie said in the past Planning Commission adopted its yearly meeting schedule in January once the County Commissioners have adopted theirs, but this year she is requesting the 2026 meeting schedule be considered at the December meeting so subdivision applicants and township zoning personnel can be advised sooner of the meeting dates and submittal deadlines for plats and zoning amendments. Ms. Crombie presented the 2026 meeting Date Schedule/Calendar to the board. She said Ms. Irizarry prepared the schedule and modified it, so the meeting dates are only listed once. Ms. Crombie said she edited the language regarding zoning amendments.

Motion made by Mr. Bergansky to approve the 2026 Meeting Dates Schedule/Calendar and seconded by Mr. Miller, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Model Zoning Amendments:

Ms. Crombie said there are a couple of updates to the Model Township Zoning Resolution in Article II Definitions and Article IV: District Regulations:

Similar Uses and Electric Vehicle Definitions:

Ms. Crombie said both topics were reviewed earlier this year and the final, red-lined versions adding them into the Model were prepared.

Meeting Notices:

Ms. Crombie said due to the changes in the Ohio Revised Code of how townships can post public notices regarding variances and zoning amendments, several template forms and other pages required the language to be changed. Public notice may now include newspapers, websites and social media.

Zoning Referendum Signatures:

Ms. Crombie said the eight percent (8%) voter signature requirement regarding zoning referendum was increased to thirty-five percent (35%).

Chairman Gorris asked Ms. Crombie to notify all the Townships of all the changes.

Motion made by Mr. McCaskey to incorporate changes in the Model Township Zoning Resolution and send out to all the Townships, and seconded by Mr. Neola, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Mining Operations:

Ms. Crombie said completing the Mining Operations in Geauga County that reports on townships with mining was on the list of goals to be completed by staff. She, Ms. Kobus, and intern Aden Ricketts (GIS/Planning Intern from 2024) worked on various sections. The data was pulled from ODNR (Ohio Department of Natural Resources) and the County Auditor's websites.

Ms. Kobus said the report highlights various topics such as depth to bedrock, which is shallow in townships like Thompson. She said six (6) townships have mining and she broke down the report using the information from ODNR of each by geological formation, the materials mined, how much is mined, cost, and production of each mine. Mr. Neola said he was surprised one of the townships was mining sand. Chairman Gorris said the golf course sand comes out of Chardon. Ms. Crombie said this information will be posted to Planning Commission's website.

Chairman Gorris said this is the last meeting and some members are terming out. The BOCC are reviewing applications, and he would like to thank all those reapplying. You have a voice and input to this board. It shows you care.

13. Adjournment:

Motion by Mr. Bergansky to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. McCaskey and upon a call for the vote, the motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

Chairman

Secretary/Treasurer

GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY: Month of November 2025
BUDGET - PREPARED

2-Dec-25

<u>Account</u>	<u>Annual Appropriation</u>	<u>Monthly Expenditure</u>	<u>Year to Date Expenditure</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Salaries	178,274.00	-\$13,242.96	\$165,028.26	\$13,245.74
Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$395.11	\$604.89
Hospitalization	\$31,010.00	-\$2,573.18	\$25,731.80	\$5,278.20
Medicare	\$2,950.00	-\$185.09	\$2,349.37	\$600.63
OPERS	\$24,870.00	-\$1,854.02	\$23,008.39	\$1,861.61
Worker's Comp.	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Other Expenses	\$4,010.00	-\$524.13	\$787.61	\$3,222.39
Equipment	\$2,500.00	-2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
Contracted Services	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Covid -19 Expenses	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Copier Usage Services	\$800.00	-47.25	\$371.99	\$428.01
Travel	\$4,100.00	-149.74	\$3,020.97	\$1,079.03
Advertising	\$325.00	0.00	\$69.00	\$256.00
Training	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$369.00	\$331.00
Member, Dues, Lic. Sub	\$3,200.00	\$0.00	\$3,098.00	\$102.00
Total	\$253,839.00	-\$21,076.37	\$226,729.50	\$27,109.50


 Nick Gorris, Chairman

 Gary Neola, Secretary/Treasurer

**SUMMARY RESOLUTION FOR EXPENSES
GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Mr. Chypool MOVED THE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION,
WHICH MOTION WAS SECONDED BY Commissioner Porter

WHEREAS, THE EXPENSES LISTED HEREIN HAVE BEEN INCURRED BY THE GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION IN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSION TO PERFORM ITS DUTIES; AND

WHEREAS, THESE EXPENSES HAVE BEEN REVIEWED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION AT ITS DECEMBER 9, 2025 MEETING.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION HEREBY AUTHORIZES PAYMENT OF THE FOLLOWING BILLS OR CLAIMS:

<u>P.O.</u>	<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
1159 COPIER USAGE	11/4	DEX IMAGING	\$47.25	
		- Copier Usage 9/22/25 to 10/21/25		
1165 OTHER	11/4	SOS COMPUTERS, INC./TECHNOLOGY EXPRESS	\$340.00	
		2 Dell Pro 27 inch Plus Monitors		
3341 EQUIPMENT	11/13	ENVIRONMENTS 4 BUSINESS LLC	\$2,500.00	
		- New workstation/cabinets - Split payment		
1165 OTHER	11/13	ENVIRONMENTS 4 BUSINESS LLC	\$93.26	
		- New workstation/cabinets - Split payment		
1165 OTHER	11/13	LINDA CROMBIE	\$90.87	
		Reimbursement for HP plotter cutter kit		
1166 TRAVEL	11/13	LINDA CROMBIE	\$21.42	
		- Mileage Reimbursement - Township Association Quarterly Dinner/Burton		
1166 TRAVEL	11/13	ALLYSON KOBUS	\$72.60	
		- Mileage Reimbursement - Farmland Preservation Plan - Soil and Water Annual Dinner - Township Association Quarterly Dinner/Burton		
1166 TRAVEL	11/13	LINDA CROMBIE	\$55.72	
		- Mileage Reimbursement - ODOT Access Ohio Workshop		
TOTAL				\$3,221.12


Nick Gorris, Chairman


Gary Neola, Secretary/Treasurer

<u>Planning Commission Revenues</u>	<u>Year to Date Balance:</u>
January	\$317.40
February	\$1,392.50
March	\$150.00
April	\$1,100.00
May	\$684.83
June	\$4,267.42
July	\$450.00
August	\$1,700.00
September	\$3,300.00
October	\$600.00
November	\$1,750.00
	Yearly Total: \$15,712.15