

MINUTES
ONTARIO PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 11, 2026

The Ontario Planning Commission met in regular session on March 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., in the Municipal Building with Jill Knight presiding. Present during roll call were Commission members Jill Knight, Diane Wolfe, Hank Webb, Service-Safety Director Michael Morton, and Mayor Josh Bradley; Engineer Mark Rufener, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Zoning Inspector Benji Hall, Councilman Rick Pauley, Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker and Assistant Clerk of Council Abbey Beaver.

The minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of December 10, 2025 were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

The first item to come before the Commission was a variance request submitted by Saint John's United Church of Christ to add a second ground sign at 2010 Park Avenue West.

Holly Hutyera, St. John's Council President, explained that Saint John's UCC is renting space from Hope Lutheran Church. St. John's UCC would like to put a temporary sign next to the Hope Lutheran Church sign. There is no plan to put a sign on Briggs Drive.

At 4:05 p.m., the Public Hearing was opened for the variance request by St. John's UCC, Section 1146.03 (e) (1) Signs By Number, Size and Location - one ground sign per street for each 500 ft. of frontage. Notice of Public Hearing letters were mailed to adjoining property owners.

At 4:06 p.m., hearing no one who wished to speak, the Public Hearing was closed.

Mrs. Wolfe moved to approve St. John's UCC variance request, second by Mrs. Knight. Five members cast their votes aye, zero nay, and the motion passed.

The second item to come before the Commission was an expired permit request for The Holden Agency to rezone property located on Stumbo/Ferguson Road from R2/R3 to PUD (Planned Unit Development).

Mr. Medwid advised:

- The PUD was going to cover a subdivision and there is no time frame set in our code for a subdivision.
- The Holden Agency was to amend their PUD plan, but we never heard back from them.
- His recommendation was to bring this back to the Commission after one year if there wasn't any forward progress on the project and have the Commission vote to dismiss the rezone request.

Mr. Webb moved to dismiss the rezone request for property located on Stumbo/Ferguson Road from R2/R3 to PUD (Planned Unit Development), second by Mrs. Wolfe. Five members cast their votes aye, zero nay, and the motion to dismiss passed.

Commission members discussed the PUD on Walker Lake Road in front of the Cinema.

- There has been no progress in over a year.
- Moment Development had difficulties securing construction bonds.
- Contacting them has been difficult.
- The PUD rezone was approved.
- They may have to go back through a plan review process.

Next on the agenda was the discussion on sidewalks in front of the new Ohio Health Children's Hospital.

Inspector Hall gave some background:

- City code states new buildings are required to have front sidewalks.
- There are no sidewalks adjacent to the property.
- Ohio Health is asking in their site plan if they need to have front sidewalks to the building.

Mayor Bradley explained:

- The Comprehensive Plan outlines connectivity.
- It is in our code that any new construction must have sidewalks.
- Safe Route to Schools map out the City's sidewalks.
- One of the biggest complaints from our residents is not having connectivity when walking.
- It would give the City more opportunity for grants if they put a sidewalk in, it is something we can connect to down the road.

Mr. Rufener stated there is a bus stop that could be used close to that location.

Director Morton stated:

- The idea is to make the City walkable.
- It's possible Richland County Transit would add a stop at this new hospital.

Planning Commission agreed to follow code and require sidewalks at Ohio Health Children's Hospital, or they can apply for a variance.

There was discussion about sidewalks for the new houses being built on Clare Road and Park Avenue West. Inspector Hall advised they are following code, but the builder could apply for a variance.

The last item to come before the Commission was nominating a member from Planning Commission to the Community Investment Corporation (CIC) Committee.

Mayor Bradley explained in the CIC bylaws a member of Planning Commission is to serve on CIC and he described what they do.

Mr. Webb expressed interest in serving on CIC.

Director Morton moved to have Hank Webb serve on CIC, second by Mrs. Knight. Five members cast their votes aye, zero nay, and the motion passed.

Inspector Hall updated:

- A new Vision business is going in next to Five Guys. They are taking both spaces.
- He is currently working with Chick-Fil-A and Ohio Health.
- Rual King is starting demolition work at the mall.
- The Puerta Vallarta Mexican Restaurant had some issues with their fire alarm company. They hired a new company for their fire suppression system.

Mrs. Knight welcomed Mr. Webb to the Planning Commission.

Mayor Bradley stated they are working on the zoning code update. Planning Commission members are welcome to attend the meetings. He will forward emails and bring updates to Planning Commission for discussion. He wants Planning Commission involved.

Mrs. Knight suggested amending the Planning Commission Rules to include a procedure on breaking a tie vote. This will be researched and discussed at the next meeting.

At 4:29 p.m., with no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Mrs. Wolfe moved to adjourn, second by Mr. Webb.

/s/ Jill Knight, Chair

Date