

The stated meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington was held on Tuesday, July 22, 2025 via webinar and in-person at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with Chairman Nicholas Brown presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: BROWN, ROBINSON, BAKER, NEWELL,
WEATHERLY
Excused: DICELLO

Also Present: Township Engineer Lee
County Planner Narcowich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Weatherly made a MOTION, seconded by Mr. Brown to approve the minutes from the Planning Commission Meeting of June 24, 2025.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

PRESENTATION: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review LD-25-02 Redeemer Valley Farm Manure Compost Facility – Final Major Land Development Plan and the request of waiver from the land development process:

Mr. Brown said the applicant proposes to construct a six (6) bay roofed compost bin structure with total dimensions of 10 ft. wide by 72 ft. long with each bay being 12 feet long. Along with the proposed compost structure, the applicant is proposing a 12 ft. wide, 72 ft. long concrete access pad, an 80 ft. long stone access lane, 4" PVC piping and aluminum gutters to collect the stormwater runoff. The applicant is requesting a waiver from the required land development process. The applicant would be eligible for final minor land development plan approval contingent upon that the applicant adequately address all review comments prior to recording the plans.

Ms. Rachel Razi, Executive Director of Redeemer Valley Farm, requested a waiver from the land development process. Redeemer Valley Farm has been composting manure for decades. We compost manure from sheep and goats that we turn into fertilizer that is used in our two-acre community garden amongst the 90-acres that the sisters own.

We have joined forces with Penn State Extension, USDA Natural Conservation Services and Montgomery County Conservation District and came up with a nutrient management plan that the farm follows, and we have been given funding to improve our composting facility. Proposed is a bin system of six bins that would be constantly rotated as the manure breaks down that holds six months of manure which then gets placed around the property to add nutrients necessary for good soil health.

The proposed facility would have three sides and a roof, and we follow all rules and regulations through the USDA and through our nutrient management plan. We feel we are eligible for the waiver as the square footage falls under 10,000 sq. ft. for the primary maximum disturbance area. This facility would be an accessory to our barn and the purpose of the stone road is to maintain erosion. We do have a stormwater management retention and detention basin onsite, or we could just add a seepage pit. No plumbing or electricity is proposed; it is just a structure similar to the photo that was presented.

Mr. Brown clarified that the applicant addressing stormwater management is the only substantive comment listed in the Township Engineer's review letter in order to get the waiver approved. Is that correct?

Ms. Allison Lee replied there are zoning comments listed that can be addressed by the applicant without having to go before the Zoning Hearing Board and other general comments such as the buffer, but stormwater management is most critical for the impervious coverage.

Ms. Razi said we request a waiver from the overall land development approval process. Regarding the buffer, we worked with the Shade Tree Commission where we will be doing massive tree planting of 20 trees at the farm in the fall and our goal is not to remove any trees. Also, she spoke with Ms. Lee about whether the retention/detention basin could capture the rest of the water, so she understands what we already have on the property. The applicant will comply with all the other comments listed by the Township Engineer's review letter.

Mr. Weatherly questioned whether a professional engineer will be signing these plans prior to construction.

Ms. Razi replied the plans were designed and signed off by Nicholas Parish who is the USDA Engineer for our area.

Mr. Weatherly clarified there was a discussion about routing the pipe to the existing stormwater basin. Is that correct?

Ms. Lee replied yes, there was a stormwater basin constructed as part of the barn addition about three or four years ago and we can see whether it could hold and convey the stormwater runoff from the new addition, otherwise, we would be fine if the applicant wanted to add a new BMP for the impervious coverage for the compost facility.

Mr. Baker clarified that the plan shows 720 sq. ft. of impervious surface. Is that correct?

Ms. Razi replied yes, the roadway will be pervious, but the actual facility will be the impervious area.

Ms. Lee replied the total is 1,583 sq. ft. because the access drive eventually will become compacted and then become impervious.

Ms. Razi said the USDA Engineer is waiting for the outcome to update the plans to include the information that needs to be on the plan.

Ms. Lee said the stormwater management and all review comments will need to be addressed before the plans are recorded; however, the applicant could get a recommendation for project approval.

Mr. Brown asked for any public comment. There were none.

Mr. Brown made a MOTION, seconded by Ms. Robinson to recommend granting the waiver from the land development process.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary