

Keene Township Planning Commission

Minutes from meeting dated 3-10-2025

Denny Briggs called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call:

Present: Denny Briggs, Ray Krieger, Cori Wilber, Matt Stahlin, Nate Wolff

Absent: Nancy Solomon

Note: 1 current vacancy

There were approximately 6 members of the community present along with Zoning Administrator Jeanne Vandersloot.

Changes to the agenda:

Wilber pointed out that the date at the top of the agenda should include "Wednesday" instead of "Monday". Wilber made a motion to accept the agenda with that minor amendment. Stahlin seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Approval of last meeting minutes:

Vandersloot pointed out incorrect spelling of Solomon's name. Discussed and decided to add a sentence at the end of the first public comment section indicating that Wolff agrees with the PC's approach to working on ordinances.

Stahlin made a motion to accept the minutes from the 2-26-2025 meeting as amended. Wolff seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Report from Township Board Rep:

Nothing of note for the PC. Board has been working on the budget.

Report from Zoning Administrator:

No zoning permits or land divisions so far this month. Helping one family prepare for a land division. Wilber asked if Vandersloot has received an application for a cell tower, as Vandersloot had expected. Nothing received yet and Vandersloot stated she has not received any further communication about it. Briggs asked if the date for township cleanup day had been finalized. It's expected to be finalized at the 3/12 board meeting. Briggs suggested that the township send a flyer about cleanup day to residents whose properties need to be cleaned up.

Public Comment – Topics not on the agenda:

- None.

New Business:

- Started working on the battery ordinance. Briggs recommended that the PC take the same approach as they did with the wind energy ordinance, where bulletpoints that need to be focused on are identified, any necessary research conducted, and then the PC can return to those items when they resume working on the ordinance.
- The draft ordinance provided in the PC packets is the draft from Foster Swift, which includes a CREO section.
- The PC went through the ordinance section by section, with members agreeing with virtually everything in the ordinance. Decided to add a section about stray voltage per Vandersloot’s recommendation, and to add a section specifying which location(s) or zone(s) battery storage facilities could be allowed in.
- Discussed whether or not District 3 would be adequate for a battery storage facility. Briggs commented that if a district was included in the ordinance and an applicant wanted to place a battery storage facility elsewhere, they could apply for a zoning variance.
- Decided to add “dark sky compliant” to the lighting section.
- Vandersloot presented two maps to the PC members with locations that she would suggest for battery storage districts. A brief discussion was held about the location of PC members’ property (owned or leased) in relation to one of Vandersloot’s proposed locations, and the potential for that member(s) to abstain from voting if that location was pursued for battery storage.
- The PC skipped the setbacks and location sections and will return to those at a next meeting.
- Stahlin recommended that wording in the fencing section be changed from “may” to “shall”, to clarify that the township will require fencing. All agreed.
- Wilber requested that language be added for yearly fire testing. All agreed.
- Wolff made a motion to suspend working on the battery storage ordinance and to resume at an upcoming meeting. Stahlin seconded. All approved. Motion carried.
- “Homework”:
 - Entire PC: come back prepared to work on setbacks and district / location.
 - Wilber: research the lifespan of batteries and facilities (if applicable).

Old Business:

- None

Public Comment – Any Topic:

- None

Adjournment:

- Stahlin made a motion to adjourn. Wilber seconded. All approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Minutes recorded by Cori Wilber.