

PUTNAM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Thursday, January 22nd, 2026
ANNUAL MEETING
Putnam County Courthouse Courtroom 221

MINUTES

On Thursday, January 22, 2026, the Putnam County Planning Commission (PCPC) held its Annual Meeting at the Putnam County Courthouse in Winfield, WV. The session convened in Room 221, also known as the Old Courtroom, located on the building's second floor.

The meeting was convened at 6:00 p.m. by President David Mills. After the Pledge of Allegiance, a roll call confirmed that a quorum was present.

Members Present: Jason Baker, Jim Dodrill, Brian Ellis, Dave Hobba, David Mills, Jacob Pack, Donald Pauley, Steve Perry, Sara Steorts, Travis Willard

Members Absent: Tim Engel, Bryan Hoylman, Vic Mays, Glenn Yeager II

Staff Present: David Coll, Melissa Sargent, Denise May

Others Present Who Signed In: Shirley Jones, Richard Jones, Mary Beth Brown, Rick Rhodes, Sharon Rhodes, Lee Ann Grogg, Charles Caldwell, Jason C. Miller, Ryan Thomas, Rick Parsons, Austin Rowe, Patricia Mitchell, Tim Meeks, Amy & Steve Golder

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the December 18, 2025, meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Jacob Pack and seconded by Brian Ellis. The motion carried.

Election of 2026 Officers:

The Nominating Committee presented the following candidates for the 2026 term:

- **President:**
 - Jim Dodrill was nominated for the office of President.
 - Motion: Brian Ellis moved to elect Jim Dodrill as President; seconded by Jacob Pack.
 - Result: The motion carried, and Jim Dodrill was declared elected.
- **Vice President:**
 - Withdrawal: The committee noted that David Hobba submitted a formal letter to withdraw his name from consideration for Vice President.
 - Nomination: Donald Pauley was nominated for the office of Vice President.
 - Motion: Jim Dodrill moved to elect Donald Pauley as Vice President; seconded by Jacob Pack.
 - Result: The motion carried, and Donald Pauley was declared elected.

Jim Dodrill accepted the gavel from David Mills, marking the transition in leadership.

Citizen Concerns: There were no citizen concerns expressed.

Public Hearing: Chairperson Jim Dodrill opened the public hearing for **PCPC REZ 2025-03**.

Conflict of Interest: David Mills disclosed a conflict of interest and recused himself from the discussion and any subsequent action.

Staff Presentation: Staff presented a summary of the application; a copy of this report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference.

PCPC REZ 2025-03: MAT Equities, LLC has submitted a Zoning Amendment Application for a Rezoning for a 0.61 +/- acre property (Tax Map 222, Parcel 27.12) which is between Ellis Drive and Commerce Drive in Hurricane, WV 25526. The request is to rezone the property from "R-1" Single Family Residential District to "C-1" Suburban Commercial District.

Applicant comments: Tim Meeks (1055 East Highland Drive, Hurricane, WV) was called to the microphone but offered no comments.

Public comments:

- **Ryan Thomas (7 Ellis Drive, Hurricane)** expressed opposition to the rezoning of TM 222, P 27.12 from R-1 single-family to commercial. Ms. Thomas emphasized her commitment to the community and its schools, noting that the current residential zoning was a primary factor in her relocation to Putnam County. She voiced concerns that a commercial development or storage facility would negatively impact neighborhood safety, increase crime risks, and cause personal anxiety. Additionally, she noted that while existing businesses on Commerce Drive are currently unobtrusive, the proposed rezoning would represent a direct intrusion on her quality of life. Ms. Thomas further stated her opposition to any property access from Ellis Drive.
- **Rick Parsons (3 Ellis Drive; Owner, 5 & 9 Ellis Drive):** Mr. Parsons spoke in opposition to the requested rezoning of Lot 6 to 'C-1' Suburban Commercial District. While noting a long-standing personal friendship with the applicant, Mr. Parsons emphasized that his opposition is based on protecting the residential integrity of the neighborhood. His concerns included:
 1. Nuisance and Infrastructure: Historical issues with noise and water runoff originating from existing commercial developments behind the subdivision.
 2. Operational Hours: Observed instances where adjacent commercial entities operated well beyond standard business hours.
 3. Buffer Inadequacy: Acknowledgment of Thor Meeks' proposal to install a 10-foot fence, which Mr. Parsons deemed insufficient to mitigate the impact of a commercial office within the subdivision.
 4. Neighborhood Consensus: Submission of a homeowner petition opposing the rezoning due to anticipated negative impacts on property values and residential character (petition included in the summary presented by the Office of Planning and Infrastructure).
 5. Administrative Concerns: Allegations of historical preferential treatment toward the applicant by the commission and a report that the applicant has not contributed to existing subdivision maintenance dues. Mr. Parsons concluded by formally requesting that the Planning Commission deny the rezoning application.
- **Austin Rowe (408 Parkview Drive, Hurricane, WV 25526):** Mr. Rowe expressed concern regarding current and potential land instability (slippage) in his and neighboring backyards. He also noted existing noise disturbances from Quantum and fears these will intensify if the rezoning is approved.

Jim Dodrill closed the public hearing.

The commission engaged in a comprehensive deliberation of the subject property. The discussion addressed public commentary, land-use optimization, and access logistics, including the feasibility of an Ellis Drive entry for Mr. Meeks. Members also reviewed the original intended use alongside potential private encumbrances such as restrictive covenants and HOA regulations.

Discussion and Action:

1. *Will the proposed amendment protect and promote public health, safety, convenience, morals, and general welfare?*
 - a. Discussion: Commissioners Jacob Pack, Dave Hobba, Brian Ellis, and Donald Pauley noted that the applicant requires property access via Commerce Drive if access from Ellis Drive is unavailable. This sentiment was supported by the broader group.
 - b. Finding: The Commission determined the criteria were met.
2. *Is the amendment consistent in achieving the objectives of the adopted comprehensive Plan, US 35 corridor Management Plan, and the Teays Valley Land Use Plan?*
 - a. Jacob Pack and Brian Ellis agree for the reasons stated above; furthermore, the subject property abuts a 'C-1' property."
3. Jim Dodrill entertained a motion of approval, to which Jacob Pack motioned, and Travis Willard seconded.
4. Roll Call Vote:
 - a. Result: Motion carried (5 Yes, 3 No)
 - i. Ayes (5): Brian Ellis, David Hobba, Jacob Pack, Sara Steorts, Travis Willard
 - ii. Nays (3): Jason Baker, Donald Pauley, Steven Perry
5. Upon motion by Jacob Pack, seconded by Travis Willard, the Planning Commission approved PCPC REZ 2025-03 Rezoning (Tax Map 222, Parcel 27.12) for recommendation to the County Commission. The motion carried.

Annual Report: Mr. Coll presented the 2025 Annual Report; a summary of key performance indicators and financial results was provided to all members.

Unfinished Business: No unfinished business was brought before the assembly.

New Business: No new business was introduced.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: The next regular session is scheduled for February 26, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed:  _____, David Coll, Planning Director

Attest:  _____, Presiding Officer

Minutes were approved:  _____