

# **Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board**

## **Minutes of 2/12/26**

The Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) met on Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building to conduct a Variance Hearing for 33 Valley Street. A list of visitors attending is on file in the Township Office.

### **Present:**

Brian Foster - Chairman  
Julie Mackey - Vice-Chairman  
Larry Watts - Board Member

### **Also Present:**

Jennifer Blouch - Secretary  
Justin Hayman - Operations Coordinator  
Truman Heberlig - Zoning Officer  
Rachel James - Solicitor

### **Visitors**

James and Jenny Pritchard, Applicants  
Forrest Woodward, Township Supervisor  
Arthur Dalla Piazza, Planning Commission

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Foster called the hearing to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Purpose of Hearing**

Chairman Foster announced that the hearing is to consider a variance of Article 7, Section 705 of the Zoning Ordinance, pertaining to lot area, lot width, impervious coverage, and building setbacks. The request submitted by James and Jenny Pritchard, 33 Valley Road:

1. A deck/structure located 11 feet from Valley Road, within the required 25-foot front setback.
2. Impervious coverage exceeding the 30% maximum, with 3,350 sq. ft. proposed vs. 1,960.2 sq. ft. permitted.

### **Applicant James Pritchard**

Mr. Pritchard provided background on the property and improvements:  
Driveway / Impervious Surface

- The driveway area had historically been grass, causing ruts and mud.

# **Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board**

## **Minutes of 2/12/26**

- Modified stone was added to create stable parking for four vehicles.
- Applicant stated the stone drains water and does not cause runoff issues.

### **Deck / Structure**

- A deteriorating stone retaining wall was removed and replaced with a new retaining wall.
- The flat area above the wall was covered with stained pallets tied together with 2x4s and surrounded by railing.
- Applicant stated it was intended for aesthetics, not as a traditional deck, and is not attached to the house.

### **Setback Concerns**

- Applicant questioned the 25-foot setback requirement, noting many homes along Valley Street sit close to the roadway.

### **Solicitor's Questions**

Attorney James confirmed:

- Applicant received proper notice of the hearing.
- Engineering and hand-drawn maps were entered as Exhibits.
- A letter from November 20, 2025, from the Township Secretary regarding permitting was entered.
- The Zoning Hearing Board application was entered.

### **Planning Commission Comments**

Mr. Dalla Piazza noted:

- Most of the impervious areas are the expanded driveway.
- A driveway permit may have been required for the improvement.
- The lot has two front yards due to its corner location (Valley Street and Iron Street).

### **Township Supervisor Comments**

Supervisor Woodward expressed concern about:

- Impervious coverage exceeding ordinance limits.
- Potential for increased runoff to the street.
- Suggested deck removal or driveway reduction could improve compliance.

# Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board

## Minutes of 2/12/26

### **Additional Discussion**

- Applicant reiterated that the stone driveway does not cause runoff and is necessary for vehicle access.
- Applicant emphasized the deck is movable and not a permanent structure.
- Board members discussed whether the pallet platform constitutes a "structure" under zoning definitions.

### **Executive Session**

The Board recessed at 7:40pm and reconvened at 8:00pm.

### **Board Decision**

Upon a Mackey/Watts motion, the Zoning Hearing Board voted unanimously to grant the variance for the deck/structure, with the following conditions:

- Applicant is directed to meet with the Township Engineer to identify an alternative material or solution for the driveway expansion that complies with zoning requirements.

Hearing concluded at 8:06pm.

### **Minutes**

Upon a Mackey/Watts motion, the Zoning Hearing Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of January 8, 2026.

### **Adjournment**

Upon a Mackey/Watts motion, the Zoning Hearing Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Blouch  
Secretary