

BETHEL TOWNSHIP, MIAMI COUNTY OHIO ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2026 – 6:30 PM

TOWNSHIP MEETING ROOM, 8735 S. SECOND STREET, BRANDT, TIPP CITY, OHIO

Meeting brought to order: 6:35 pm

1: Board and Township Staff Introductions

Board Members in attendance: Mr. Cornish, Mr. Hirt, Ms. Royse, Mr. Underwood

Staff in attendance: Arthur Franklin – Zoning Administrator, Cathy Fortunato - Zoning Secretary

2: New Business:

Review of Commission Procedures

CASE: ZTA-01-26:

Comments on behalf of the applicant were given by Trustee Julie Reese –

She stated the zoning code has not been updated since 2018. Public meetings have been going on since April, 2025 that included the BZA, ZC and citizens. Much of what is in the resolution text is being interpreted differently as the language is not specific enough. Several of the proposed changes are to tighten up definitions and add new ones. She said the changes to I-1 are intended to honor the intended use of I-1 properties – clean, low-impact industrial manufacturing located indoor limiting off-site impacts with landscaping and screening. She went on to contrast that with I-2 – provide a place for heavy manufacturing that may require outside space that will have off-site impact to include noise, etc. This is why the trucking terminals should be moved to the I-2 district. She said the proposed changes are in line with the other I-1 townships in Miami County to include the eight townships which do not have their own zoning and fall under Miami County zoning. She went on to explain the rationale for moving to conditional uses. By doing this, the BZA can approve each request based on each conditional use application.

Public speaking in support of this case:

Lori Langford – She thinks it is great that we are updating and providing better clarification in the Zoning Resolution and she wants to see Bethel remain Bethel.

Don Langford – He has lived here for 30 years and doesn't want to look out his door and see a truck stop. He is concerned other large properties will sell for this purpose and it will bring down property values.

Dave Marsh – He has lived here 33 years. He wants to Bethel to remain a residential community.

Connie Elam – Resident for 78 years. She is representing the Bethel Twp Preservation Alliance LLC. They are giving their full support to ZTA-01-26. Procedural pauses don't serve Bethel Township. They are looking to this commission to act as the first line of defense against decreased property values and infrastructure expense caused by heavy trucking. She said as evidenced by the people in attendance, the Zoning Commission had the overwhelming support of the community.

Jodi DiCenzo – She views the changes as much-needed modernizing. They provide a decision-making framework that will make executing responsibilities more efficiently and appropriately.

Public speaking in opposition of this case:

Ayvaz Akifov – He owns a trucking business. He said the changes will make businesses non-conforming which will complicate business operations. He said people with these business acting lawfully shouldn't wake up less lawful than when they went to bed. He has never seen a zoning code that requires tax returns. He wants the board to approve the changes only with modifications that include grandfathering for current owners, striking the tax return requirement. He also spoke of how difficult it is for a truck driver to find a place to park when returning home from weeks on the road.

-Mr. Hirt pointed out that grandfathering is covered by the ORC and that supersedes the Township Resolution.

-Ms. Royse asked if he had a zoning certificate. He stated it didn't matter – that he was told by someone at Bethel Township what he was doing was legal and has been doing it for 5-6 years.

The property owner, Ravshan Akhmedov at 9195 SR 201 stated he has been there since 2019. He came to the township at that time and was told he could do heavy truck parking, maintenance, repairs, etc. He asked for paperwork stating as such and was told he didn't need it because what he was asking to do was already permitted. He has never had an issue with any neighbors and does not do anything illegal.

Steve Owen – He is a general contractor for the trucking properties. He feels there is a lot of miscommunication going on and that many of the owners/employees are scared to death. He builds for them and knows what they do. He said the trucks do not sit for weeks at a time – only a few days in between trips. He said when he was on the BZA they passed the type of uses that are on these properties now.

Islam Akhmedov – Also spoke of owners not being given the proper conditional use certification by Bethel Township when asked for. He stated that at the August 4th Township Trustee meeting it was said that Bethel Township (in years past) did not have an experienced zoning administrator. He said the changes should be delayed and the properties in question should be given reasonable time to apply and receive conditional use permits or establish grandfathering.

Dzhalil Rasulov – He lives in Huber Heights and is here on behalf of friends and relatives in Bethel Township. He pointed out that the Miami Co Planning Commission recommended denial of ZTA-01-26 on July 23, 2026. He would like the board to approve the changes with modifications to include grandfathering for existing lawful owners and to strike the tax return requirement.

Akhmad Akhmedov – Many people here work for weeks to months on the road and family is waiting. His father was a truck driver and they would have to drive an hour to a truck stop to see him and pick him up to go home.

Asim Akhmedov – He would like to see each owner given written notice of his/her property status and given the opportunity to apply for the appropriate conditional use, etc. In the meantime, they should be allowed to continue current operations. After that, the township should address individual concerns such as noise, traffic, etc. He said he knew of an owner that had no idea he was violating the Zoning Resolution and Bethel Township couldn't show the owner's lawyer proof of mailing any such notification. Owners should not be expected to know they are violating the code – the township should have proof of mailing notice to the owners that they are violating the resolution.

Jerry explained that the legal notices (by the ORC) go to the property owner.

Board Discussion

1.05 Mr. Hirt recommended taking out 'by the Zoning Administrator' under the second bullet under 'Proposed'

-Mr. Cornish said he would like to see a specific definition of what 'drainage and stormwater management' is.

-Mr. Hirt explained that was part of the other case that is not currently being heard but they should make a note of that for the board.

-Mr. Cornish said they need to visit the 'heavy truck' section that the hard-working citizens of Bethel Township have brought to the attention of the board. He doesn't want them to unnecessarily be put out of business.

-Mr. Hirt thinks there is a lot of misconception. He pointed out that almost all who spoke were actually not township residents but were welcome members of the community. He also thinks part of his recommendation would be that the case would be run by legal council before it's adopted. Mr. Underwood agreed.

- Mr. Underwood suggested a limit of 3 junk cars as opposed to 5 in section 4.
- Mr. Wilkerson explained when you read this by itself it doesn't make sense but when you read Article 40, in conjunction with a junk yard, which was in the other case, it does. The 5 cars do not refer to residential yards, but instead to a salvage yard.
- Mr. Underwood asked about residential and Mr. Franklin replied there could not be any in a residential yard.
- Mr. Underwood asked about solar panels as only a solar farm was referenced in the definitions.

Mr. Underwood moved to approve case ZTA-01-26 with the modification that Trucking, Fencing, Junk Vehicles and Stormwater Management would be further considered by the Trustees before further approval of the Resolution.

Mr. Cornish seconded

Approved 4-0

Votes:

Mr. Cornish: Yes

Mr. Hirt: Yes

Ms. Underwood: Yes

Ms. Royse: Yes

5: Old Business

July 23, 2026 meeting minutes were unanimously approved

6: Other

Communications and Reports –Looking for ZC board volunteers

7: Adjournment: 8:04PM