



Minutes: Revitalize 209 Committee May 27, 2025

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Revitalize 209 Committee was held on May 27, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm with Nick Theofilos (Vice Chair) presiding.

Committee Members: Nick Theofilos (Vice Chairperson), Michael Coffey, Ralph Dinkle, John Kahwaty, George Kuchek, and Sonny Murray in person.

Absent: Deborah Emin

Township Staff: James Brechbiel, ED Manager, in person, and Annette Atkinson, Supervisor, via Zoom.

Township Residents/Guests: None.

Minutes and Agenda

- Michael Coffey made a motion to accept the April minutes, seconded by Ralph Dinkle. Motion passed 6-0.
- Ralph Dinkle made a motion to accept the May agenda, seconded by George Kuchek. Motion passed 6-0.

Correspondence

- None.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

- None.

New Business:

- **Application – Richards Tree Farm**
 - The committee reviewed the application submitted for the wooden fence replacement (visible from Route 209) with a black metal fence. The new fencing would be the same height (4 ft.) and run approximately 230 ft. in length. James Brechbiel noted that, prior to the meeting, the applicant confirmed that they were in the process of retrieving two additional quotes to complete the application.
 - Nick Theofilos noted that the pricing in the application and quote seems to be accurate.
 - John Kahwaty asked to confirm if the swing gate was being replaced. James B. noted he would confirm.
- **Letter of Interest (LOI) – 5243 Milford Rd.**
 - The committee reviewed a LOI to replace the siding and shingled awning on the Gulf Station.
 - James Brechbiel noted that the owner wanted feedback from the committee to know if there would be a better project that should be considered. Nick Theofilos noted that the siding and shingle replacement would be a good starting point for revitalization efforts on the property. George Kuchek noted the shingle awning is in poor condition and should be kept in the project scope.
 - Michael Coffey asked if the owner was intending to keep the gas station, and James Brechbiel noted he believed so. Sonny Murray asked if the owner had any tenants living in the house and James B. noted that it was used as a garage and gas station, not an apartment. James B. noted that Zoning was reviewing compliance items for the property and would address them with the owner.
 - John Kahwaty made a motion to give the project a metric rating, seconded by George Kuchek. The motion passed 6-0. The committee gave the project a 3.72 out of 5.
- **Letter of Interest (LOI) – Middle Smithfield Presbyterian Church**
 - The committee reviewed an LOI outlining project repairs projected for the property; namely, a repair and repaint project for the steeples, a paving project to the entrance and portion of the parking lot, as well as an inquiry into a sign replacement and landscaping.
 - James Brechbiel noted the applicant was made aware that sign replacement wasn't part of the program's current scope. The committee discussed considering a revamped program to allow it.
 - The committee reviewed the steeple project. Nick Theofilos noted 3 out of the 4 sides on both steeples are visible from Route 209 and in need of repair/repainting for the trim and rails. James Brechbiel noted that the roof pitch on the one steeple was missing, and replacement was not part of the project as the church is planning to replace the full roof in 5 years, including the steeple pitch.
 - The committee reviewed the paving project. Nick Theofilos noted that, although there was a need for repaving the lot, the project may not make the most demonstrable difference visually. George Kuchek noted that the project would be a safety improvement as the parking lot is in need of repair. John Kahwaty noted the project would have to be scaled back for the application, as paving the entire lot

would well exceed \$20,000. The committee discussed that, although it prefers projects that pave dirt lots, it could consider resurfacing for the church's parking lot as the township uses the lot for overflow from its events at Echo Lake Park and the Community and Cultural Center (CCC). The committee discussed that the church scale back the project to be for the driveway and front section of the lot, which should help keep it within the \$20,000 allotment for the grant program.

- George Kuchek made a motion for metric rating of the projects, Ralph Dinkle seconded, and the motion passed 6-0. The committee gave the steeple repair/painting project a 3.92 out of 5 and gave the paving project a 3.28 out of 5. The committee declined to give a metric on the landscaping project as there was not enough information submitted for deliberation.

Old Business: James Brechbiel noted the following updates for one (1) Letter of Interest (LOI), two (2) applications in incomplete status, and two (2) projects preliminarily approved:

- LOI Status – **The Pocono Bazaar Flea Market** asked the committee for feedback/suggestions for projects that would make a demonstrable difference for the property. The committee noted that the biggest issue with the property is the marquee, which is outside the project scope. There was a discussion about having signage included as part of a revamped program or another grant. John Kahwaty noted that the township could set the guidelines so that signs for consideration could be made only of natural materials, be dark sky compliant, etc.
- Application Status – **Jinyin Temple** – The Board of Supervisors (BOS) requested additional quotes from contractors who are local, and the applicant reported they were working to retrieve those.
- Application Status– **House at 5027 Milford Rd.** – The applicant noted that it had two (2) quotes from contractors and was working to retrieve a third to complete its application.
- Preliminarily Approved Status – **Pocono Café's** project for paving was reimbursed.
- Preliminarily Approved – **The Big A Restaurant** expects to do the remaining portions of its staining/repainting project.

Announcements:

- James Brechbiel noted the following updates for and within the Township and directed the committee to review the bottom of their agendas for upcoming events:
 - Middle Smithfield Township was awarded for two (2) applications submitted to the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau; \$4,000 for its Main Street Beautification project that includes refacing the sewer pump stations and landscaping projects, and \$6,500 for its Tidy Town litter pick up and landscaping projects.
 - Middle Smithfield was awarded for two (2) applications submitted for the Monroe County LSA (Local Share Account); \$75,000 for its application of the installation of pedestrian facilities and sidewalks with ADA cutouts, ADA-friendly automatic door openers, and Mosier's Dairy Farm's historical and educational installation at the CCC, and \$239,238 for the Wooddale Recreation Area and Road Department Expansion project for the design and development of a new multi-use park, community space, and leaf compost recycling sub-center at the Township's 2nd Garage Location in Woodale.
 - JuJu's Vault did their soft opening on 5/3/25, and a grand opening date will be announced.
 - Pocono Ridge Inn (former Deerfield Inn) is setting up its final inspection.
 - Mt. Nebo Phase II (plans for 30 additional units) were submitted, and Planning Commission is reviewing.
 - The Marshalls Creek Explosion Anniversary is 6/26/25. Banners will be displayed at the memorial site.
 - NeighborWorks Home Buyers Seminar is booked Sat., 11/1/25. The event is open to the public and free.
 - Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) is working to schedule additional events/seminars at CCC.

Public Comments:

- None.

Meeting adjournment:

- John Kahwaty made a motion to adjourn at 6:58 pm, seconded by Michael Coffey. Motion passed 6-0.

The next meeting will be held on June 24, 2025, at 5:30 pm at the Township Municipal Center.

Respectfully Submitted, James Brechbiel, Middle Smithfield Township