

ROBESON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

March 2, 2026

The regular Meeting of the Robeson Township Planning Commission was held in person at 2689 Main Street, Birdsboro, Pa., March 02, 2026, at 7:00 PM. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Acting Chairman Steve Marino. Also attending were Commission members Henry Ramsay, Terri Lampe-Melcher, Dave Talarico and Bob Seal. Chairman William Meister and Vice Chairman Gregg Eshelman were absent from the March Meeting. Also, in attendance were Township Engineer Ryan Rhode and Administrator Paula Cullen.

Minutes:

The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from October 6, 2025, as well as January 5, 2026, were reviewed by the members in attendance. A motion was made by Ms. Lampe-Melcher and a second by Mr. Ramsay to approve the Meeting Minutes as presented, the motion passed unanimously.

Planning Commission / EAC Liaison – Currently S. Marion – Engineer Rhode explained to the members present that he had mischaracterized this position during the reorganization meeting. Engineer Rhode explained that this position is not a liaison from the Planning Commission to the Board of Supervisors but rather a jointly held appointment between the Planning Commission and The Environmental Advisory Committee. The position was previously assigned to PC member Steve Marino. Engineer Rhode went on to explain that this position was previously held by resident Keim and that Administrator Paula Cullen researched this position and it is not mandatory that it be filled. After some discussion a motion was made by Mr. Talarico, with a second by Ms. Lampe-Melcher to remove Mr. Marion from this position and leave it vacant for now. The motion passed unanimously.

Plans for Acceptance:

None.

Plans for Review (Engineer Rhode):

Rock Hollow Woods Revision to Plan of Record – Engineer Rhode introduced the plan to the members present. Engineer Rhode stated that all the previous comments have been adequately addressed. Additionally, he highlighted the Kraft review letter

dated February 24, 2026. Michelle Zeitz and Megan Roswick were present on behalf of Rock Hollow Woods. Engineer Rhode explained that an occupancy permit has been issued for the existing barn on the site by the Township's Building Code Official.

After a brief discussion between the applicant and the members present, Mr. Ramsay, with a second from Ms. Lampe-Melcher, made a motion to recommend the approval of the Revision to Plan of Record for Rock Hollow Woods, conditioned upon the satisfaction of the items outlined in Engineer Rhode's February 24, 2026, review letter. The motion passed unanimously.

Time Extension(s):

Cedar Hill Estates – Engineer Rhode stated that an MPC time extension request had been received from the applicant requesting an extension to June 30, 2026. There was some discussion between the folks in attendance, and the members present regarding the status of this project. Several folks present questioned Engineer Rhode regarding the need to provide this extension. Engineer Rhode explained the MPC timeline associated with plan review to those in attendance. Mr. Marino, Mr. Talarico, and Mr. Ramsay addressed questions from the audience regarding the plan progress to date and the need for a recommendation regarding the time extension request. Pursuant to some discussion, Ms. Lampe-Melcher, with a second from Mr. Seal, made motion to recommend approval of the time extension request, noting some concerns with the recent lack of progress with respect to the project. The motion passed unanimously.

Items for the Good of the Order:

Stephen Del Perico – Legacy / Chestnut Hill Road Industrial Park – Engineer Rhode explained that the township had received a right to know request from Mr. Del Perico regarding this project. Engineer Rhode had invited Mr. Perico to attend the PC Meeting with any questions he had regarding the project. No one was present to discuss this matter on behalf of Mr. Del Perico.

Tree Replacement Ordinance – Engineer Rhode advised the members present that he has been looking into possible amendments to the Woodland Protection sections of the Robeson Township Zoning Ordinance. He will continue to do so and prepare some information for review by the Planning Commission.

Brookside School – ZHB application – Engineer Jason Shanner, PE was present along with applicant(s) Steven Smucker and Ben Stoltzfus to discuss the zoning

hearing application. Engineer Shaner explained that the application requests two variances. The first is from Zoning Section 403.B to permit an Amish one room school to be constructed within the R-2 Zoning District. The second is from Section 802.B of the Zoning Ordinance to allow two principal uses on one property. Engineer Shaner explained that this would be a one room schoolhouse approximately 1,500 sq ft in size. The school would serve roughly 25 to 35 students within grades 1 through 8. All students will be bused or dropped off at the school with no pedestrians walking to the school building.

Mr. Talarico expressed concerns regarding the location of the proposed entrance driveway and sight line concerns at this location of Zion Road. Ms. Lampe-Melcher questioned how many residents currently utilize Red Fox Lane. Engineer Shaner explained that Red Fox Lane would not be utilized for the school entrance. Mr. Seal asked for more information regarding the proposed lease and lease parcel. Mr. Smucker and Mr. Stoltzfus explained that this was fairly common in these circumstances within the Amish Community and that this would also allow the land to return to agriculture after the 29-year term expired. MS. Lampe-Melcher questioned how water would be provided and Engineer Shaner stated either a water service from the existing residence, or a separate well would be provided. Engineer Shaner went on to explain that they are still evaluating the most preferred method of sewage disposal. Mr. Ramsay stated that he is in favor of the requested zoning relief. Mr. Ramsay, with a second by Mr. Seal, made a motion to recommend taking a position in favor of this application. The motion passed unanimously.

Data Center Use on the Cedar Hill Site – Prior to the meeting resident Keim provided a handout to the members present regarding the power supply options and how the Township can restrict the use. He added that apart from property tax income and a few employees, Data Centers are only nuisances.

Engineer Rhode distributed a package to the members present, as well as some members of the public, which included the current Robeson Township Zoning Ordinance Section 728. Which addresses UNDEFINED OR OTHER LAND USES, a current copy of the Robeson Township DRAFT Data Center Ordinance (prepared primarily by the Environmental Advisory Committee), as well as draft Data Center Ordinances currently under review by Caernarvon Berks Co., Warick Chester Co., and Cumru Berks Co. Engineer Rhode explained that currently the Township is somewhat protected from data center proposals under Section 728. of the Zoning Ordinance. This Section permits all undefined uses as a Special Exception within the GI Zoning District. Engineer Rhode then reviewed the current draft Data Center Ordinance with the EAC members present and the Planning Commission members present. This discussion focused on the important aspect of these ordinances. This included bulk zoning data and building height requirements, setbacks to residential zoning districts, environmental impacts to water supply, noise, and air ground and

water pollution, as well as impacts to fire and emergency services. Engineer Rhode compared the sections which address these issues in the current draft to those found within the draft ordinances of the neighboring municipalities.

The discussion regarding data center concerns included many of the members of the public which attended. This discussion involving EAC members, PC members, and the general public included, but may not have been limited to the following:

- Resident Kennedy enquired if there was a subterranean limit. No one present was aware of one.
- Resident Keim suggested including the condition of a growth forecast within the Data Center Ordinance. Engineer Rhode replied that it could be deemed a condition, but that presents the issue as to how the knowledge would be used.
- Resident Bahorik asked would roof mounted solar panels affect the height requirements. The response was that it possibly would and would require further research.
- Resident Keim suggested the Ordinance includes training for local Fire Department, Police Department and security at the sole expense of the Data Center.
- Resident Bahorik commented that she had read of Fire Departments being unable to extinguish fires at Data Centers and suggested an Ordinance requirement that the Data Center supplies the Fire Department with relevant equipment and training.
- Birdsboro resident Zupancic commented that due to the speedy progress of technology the building may be outpaced within 10 years.
- Birdsboro resident Brennan enquired to what type, if any, notification residents would receive relating to Hearings and public meetings for the Data Center.
- Resident Kennedy asked for confirmation that nothing more was expected from the EAC. She continued by mentioning the current state of HB2157, wherein the PA House Energy Committee have approved it to proceed for a vote. She advised people to pay attention to the wording and not become distracted.
- Resident Weeks asked for clarification as to if the 500 homes are built then that will eliminate the construction of the Data Center. That was confirmed but the fact remained to pursue the Ordinance to restrict one being built elsewhere in the Township.
- Resident Keim shared a thought as to the quantity of fiber cable required.

- Resident McKeon asked if a letter could be submitted to the developers requesting them not to build the 500 homes. The response was that it was a “by-right” plan and everything they were doing was permitted by the Township.

After the members present and Engineer Rhode attempted to answer the questions and concerns presented, Engineer Rhode stated that he would be working on a revised draft ordinance and would present that draft at the April Planning Commission Meeting. With no further discussion being heard, no action was taken by the members present. The members present did thank the public in attendance for their ongoing concern and interest regarding this issue and requested they continue to attend meetings as they are able.

Adjournment:

At 8:49 PM, there being no further business, the Planning Commission adjourned upon a motion by Ms. Lampe-Melcher and seconded by Mr. Ramsay. The motion passed unanimously.