

ROBESON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

June 1, 2026

The regular Meeting of the Robeson Township Planning Commission was held in person at 2689 Main Street, Birdsboro, Pa., June 1, 2026, at 7:00 PM. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Vice-Chairman Gregg Eshelman. Also attending were Commission members Henry Ramsay, Terri Lampe-Melcher, Dave Talarico and Bob Seal. Chairman William Meister and member Steve Marino were absent from the June Meeting. Also, in attendance were Township Manager Osmer Deming, Engineer Ryan Rhode.

Minutes:

The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from May 4, 2026, were reviewed by the members in attendance. A motion was made by Mr. Talarico and a second by Mr. Seal to approve the Meeting Minutes as presented, the motion passed unanimously.

Plans for Acceptance:

Jarlsberg Subdivision – A motion was made by Mr. Talarico with a second by Mr. Seal to accept the Jarlsberg Subdivision Plan for review, the motion passed unanimously.

Plans for Review (Engineer Rhode):

Jarlsberg Subdivision – Design Engineer Brynn Schaffer, of Carta Engineering, introduced the subdivision plan to the members present. Mr. Schaffer stated that they can comply with all of the comments outlined within Engineer Rhode's May 30, 2026 review letter. Ms. Lampe-Melcher questioned the amount of steep slopes on the site and asked Engineer Rhode and Mr. Schaffer if they had any concerns. After some discussion by the members present Mr. Schaffer stated that he had included a written waiver request for one waiver within the plan submission. The waiver requested was to permit a plan scale of 1"=40' as opposed to the required 1"=50'. After discussion by the members present a motion was made by Ms. Lampe-Melcher with a second by Mr. Seal to recommend a waiver from Section 301.B.1. The motion passed unanimously. After some additional discussion regarding driveway grades and the outstanding outside agency approvals, Mr. Seal made a

motion with a second from Ms. Lampe-Melcher to recommend conditional final plan approval subject to the remaining comments in Engineer Rhode's May 30, 2026 review letter. The motion passed unanimously.

Brookside School Land Development Plan – Engineer Jason Shanner, PE was present along with applicant, Steven Smucker to discuss the land development plan. Engineer Shanner once again explained that the applicant has successfully obtained 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 Shanner explained that this would be a one room schoolhouse approximately 1,500 sqft in size. The school would serve roughly 25 to 40 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. Shanner also explained to the members present that there was a site meeting with Engineer Rhode and Crew Leader Renninger. The site meeting was held to discuss drainage improvements and the grading associated with the proposed entrance drive.

Mr. Shanner advised the members present that they are in receipt of Engineer Rhode's May 26, 2026 review letter. Engineer Rhode explained to the members present that there has been landscaping added to the plan and that the project has been referred to local emergency services for review. This was a comment generated by the Berks County Planning review. Vice Chairman Eshelman stated that he continues to have concerns regarding sight distance at the driveway location. All members agreed that this is a difficult site with respect to a point of entrance. Vice-Chairman Eshelman also stated that it may be worth moving the buildings back from Zion Road in order to provide more buffer area. Mr. Shanner and Mr. Smucker advised the members present that they intend to place a the playground area behind the school so this would likely not work. Ms. Lampe-Melcher revisited the landscaping issue and stated that she was in agreement with what is shown, however she would like to incorporate any comments received by the review from the Robeson Township Police Dept. Mr. Talarico stated that he had no issue with the plan but also continues to be concerned with the access driveway and safety concerns pulling out onto Zion Road. After some discussion Mr. Shanner asked if the members present would be willing to take action on the plan. Mr. Talarico made a motion with a second from Mr. Ramsay to recommend a waiver from Section 403 to permit the plan to be presented as preliminary/final. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Shanner asked if the members present would be will to recommend conditional plan approval. Vice-Chairman Eshelman advised Mr. Shanner that the Planning Commission would like to see the plan one more time. No action was taken regarding a recommendation for plan approval by the members present.

Time Extension(s):

Cedar Hill Estates – Engineer Rhode advised that a ninety-day time extension has been submitted by the Developer extending the MPC review deadline to September 30, 2026. There was a brief discussion with the attending public regarding this plan, its status, and the need to grant the extension. After some discussion Mr. Talaricio made a motion, with a second by Ms. Lampe-Melcher, to recommend approval of the time extension. The motion passed unanimously.

34 Westley Road Land Dev. – Engineer Rhode advised the members present that a time extension has been submitted by the developer extending the MPC review deadline to August 27, 2026. Mr. Seal made a motion, with a second by Ms. Lampe-Melcher, to recommend approval of the time extension. The motion passed unanimously.

Items for the Good of the Order:

Tree Replacement Ordinance Update – Remains on hold, no action taken by the members present.

Data Center Ordinance – Engineer Rhode distributed a package to the members present, as well as some members of the public, which included the latest revisions to the draft ordinance which were submitted by the EAC pursuant to their review at their meeting. 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:

- Engineer Rhode discussed the current bulk zoning criteria and proposed methods of approval.
- There was discussion between EAC Member Ms. Kennedy, Engineer Rhode, Vice-Chairman Eshelman, and the members present regarding the highlighted sections of the current draft which were recently revised.

- Generally, those present agreed that the current draft is ready to be moved on to the Board of Supervisors for continued review. The following items were discussed as part of the recommendation to advance the ordinance to the Board of Supervisors
 - The noise section and decibel allowances should be reviewed by Engineer Rhode prior to submission to the Board of Supervisors.
 - The water usage section of the draft ordinance references only the Delaware River Basin. Engineer Rhode will review this section to verify that additional drainage basins are not required to be included.
 - Resident Claudia Bahorik questioned why lighting is not addressed in the draft ordinance. Vice-Chairman Eshelman explained that this is addressed elsewhere in the zoning ordinance.
 - Resident Wesley Bahorik presented a discussion regarding land preservation and similar matters. Engineer Rhode and Vice-Chairman Eshelman explained that this matter is really more of a PA State or PA DEP matter to oversee.
 - Resident Keim advised all present that this is just the first step in the ordinance adoption process and that the ordinance will need to be advertised and posted for public comment.

After the members present, and Engineer Rhode attempted to answer the questions and concerns presented, Vice-Chairman Eshelman asked if the members present were prepared to move the draft ordinance on to the Board of Supervisors. A motion was made by Ms. Lampe-Melcher, with a second by Mr. Seal, to advance the ordinance to the Board of Supervisors for continued review conditioned upon Engineer Rhode's review of the noise and drainage basin concerns. The motion passed unanimously.

Kramer / Nanni Subdivision – Engineer Rhode explained that there is letter in the packet, dated May 14, 2026, which advises the members that the plans are adequate for municipal signature. With no action required the members present did sign the plans as presented.

Adjournment:

At 8:15 PM, there being no further business, the Planning Commission adjourned upon a motion by Ms. Lampe-Melcher and seconded by Mr. Talarico. The motion passed unanimously.