

HARRIS TOWNSHIP

224 East Main Street

Boalsburg, PA 16827

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PLANNING COMMISSION

Hybrid Meeting

March 16, 2026

7:00 PM

GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

Remote Participants	To attend via Zoom, click the link below to register and obtain a link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/LD4vQnBSQq69mnTMO-hfvA
In-Person Participants	Harris Township Office – Meeting Room 224 East Main Street Boalsburg, PA 16827
Meeting Contact: Mark Boeckel - email: manager@harristownship.org 814-466-6228	

- We ask that participants that are attending remotely remain muted with their video turned off unless recognized to speak. To reduce audio interference, please remain off speakerphone during the meeting.
- PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES: Members of the public may comment on any items not already on the agenda (five minutes per person). Comments relating to specific items on the agenda should be deferred until that point in the meeting. Written public comments or requests to speak to items, not on the agenda, and requests to comment on specific agenda items listed on the agenda, may be submitted in advance by emailing manager@harristownship.org.



HARRIS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
March 16, 2026 – 7:00 P.M.
Agenda

www.harristownship.org

1. CALL TO ORDER:

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Move to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2026 meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Members of the public are invited to comment on any items not on the agenda (five minutes per person time limit, please). Comments relating to specific items on the agenda should be deferred until appropriate points in the meeting.

4. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS:

a. TUSSEY MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT:

PennTerra Engineering recently submitted a Development of Regional Impact (DRI) application requesting an expansion of the Regional Growth Boundary (SSA) and Sewer Service Area (SSA) to include Tussey Mountain. The owners of Tussey Mountain previously discussed a potential DRI application with the Board of Supervisors in September 2024.

Tussey Mountain is currently served by public sewer as the result of a DEP-mandated connection in the early 1990s. While the property was permitted to connect to public sewer to resolve an on-lot system failure, additional wastewater generating development cannot occur without the property being added to the RGB and SSA.

On February 20, 2026, the Centre Regional Planning Agency deemed the DRI application complete and provided their recommendation (attached). The request proposes adding the 134.98-acre Tussey Mountain parcel, which includes land on both sides of Bear Meadows Road, to the RGB and SSA. The application indicates that the property owner wants to further develop the property over several phases, including remodeling and expanding the existing ski lodge. A conceptual master plan (attachment 2) is included with the application.

The Board of Supervisors discussed the completed DRI application at their meeting on March 9th and expressed support for moving the request forward for

regional consideration. Due to the magnitude of the request, this DRI would require action by the six Centre Region municipalities. The Board will consider a vote to support the request at an upcoming meeting and will need to provide findings of fact used to establish its support of the request.

The Board of Supervisors forwarded the DRI request to the Planning Commission for review and comment. If the Commission supports the request, reasoning for such support should be stated for potential inclusion by any action by the Board.

Recommendation: Discussion Item. The Planning Commission should consider providing a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

B. MINOR SUBDIVISION PLAN DISCUSSION:

The Planning Commission spent much of 2025 reviewing minor ordinance changes and technical corrections to Chapters 11 (Subdivision and Land Development) and 12 (Zoning) that were adopted by the Board of Supervisors as comprehensive amendments to both chapters. Identified in this review were several ordinance sections that might need revision but likely required more discussion than the comprehensive update allowed. The first such section is the minor subdivision plan section in Chapter 11.

Chapter 11-2.6 describes minor subdivisions as the following:

All subdivisions or land developments which do not require the installation of streets, off-site water and sewage facilities, storm drainage facilities, curbs, or sidewalks as stipulated in Article IV of this chapter are exempt from the requirement to have a preliminary review and may commence final approval procedures with submission of a plan as stipulated in § 11-2.4 of this article, provided that the additional information required in § 11-2.3A(1), (3) and (5) is submitted with the plan. No construction may commence until the plan has received final approval by the Harris Township Board of Supervisors.

How the ordinance defines minor subdivisions is straightforward – if a plan does not propose a new street, the installation of water and sewer lines, or the construction of stormwater facilities, curbs, or sidewalks, the first or preliminary plan stage is waived and the second or final plan is submitted for review and action by the Board of Supervisors. Plans that are not minor plans must first be submitted as preliminary plans that are presented to the PC prior to the BOS; once a preliminary plan is approved and signed, a final plan or a series of final plans if the project is a staged development maybe be submitted. Final plans are reviewed only by the BOS.

As a first step, staff investigated the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) to determine what this enabling legislation says about creating different classes of subdivision and land development (SALDO) plan submissions. Simply, the MPC authorizes municipalities to regulate

subdivision and land development but largely leaves it to each municipality to determine the types of plans required and the procedures for review, including whether to require preliminary plans and whether to establish categories of minor or administrative plans. In doing so, the MPC requires municipalities to clearly define each plan type permitted, identify what Township entity is granted approval authority, and adhere to standard MPC timelines.

Staff also researched how the other three Townships in the Centre Region classify SALDO plans in their ordinances. College, Ferguson, and Patton Townships allow some form of subdivision different from the typical 2-step process. How they do that varies somewhat. Two Townships allow the most minor of plans to be reviewed and approved at staff level by the Zoning Officer; one Township allows minor lot line changes with some qualifying criteria to be reviewed in one step that involves both the PC and BOS; one Township allows a combined preliminary/final process if all development proposed with a plan is to be completed in one phase; and one Township breaks their minor plans into 4 categories – minor subdivision, minor alteration, minor land development, and lot consolidation. At least one municipality further clarifies that minor plans cannot propose more than 3 single-family detached dwellings if residential or more than 1,000 square feet of new non-residential development.

After all this research, staff feel it is important to maintain a simple definition for minor subdivision plans so that those reading the regulations can easily identify when minor plans are appropriate and, perhaps more important, so that the opportunity for alternate interpretations of what constitutes a minor plan is minimized or eliminated. Staff recommend that no staff-level approvals be added to the ordinance as such decisions are best left to those elected for that purpose. Further, staff recommend that minor plans continue to be reviewed solely by the Board of Supervisors.

In practice, preliminary plans and final plans are required to be almost identical; minor plans are essentially a combination of both types of plans. Through the plan review process, reviews are conducted, to different degrees, by the Township Engineer, both the local and regional Planners, the Boalsburg Fire Chief, and the Zoning Officer, and in some cases the Sewage Enforcement Officer, the Harris Township Traffic Engineer, and the Township Solicitor. Every aspect of the Township regulations is reviewed by some professional whose responsibility it is to ensure that the plan meets the prescribed standards prior to action by the Board of Supervisors. Staff regularly reserves agenda spots only for those plans that have demonstrated nearly complete compliance with ordinance standards.

Municipalities exist within the Commonwealth that have little or no access to the types of professionals available for subdivision and land development plan reviews in Harris Township. In those municipalities, perhaps more intensive study by planning commissions and governing bodies is required, adding value to those reviews. The subdivision and land development review process is essentially ordinance compliance verification, not planning, and here staff exist to administer that compliance verification.

Should the Planning Commission identify areas of concern or aspects of the plan review process that might require additional attention, or should the planning commission feel there are reasons to make the minor subdivision and land development plan process more or less inclusive, those ideas should be discussed.

Recommendation: Discussion item. If the PC would like additional information or research to be completed, staff can provide such at a future meeting.

c. CHANGES TO THE FORMAT OF MEETING MINUTES:

Staff will be implementing changes to the meeting minute format for future meetings. Currently, minutes are very detailed and include a near verbatim account of discussion at meetings. Doing so takes a considerable amount of staff time and may include substantial detail that was not relevant to the actions taken. Future minutes will summarize discussion without detailing personal opinions or arguments, instead focusing on the rationale behind decisions to show that the Commission exercised proper diligence.

No discussion required. This item is for informational purposes only.

d. AGENDA FOR APRIL:

The Planning Commission will be meeting with the Board of Supervisors on April 22nd to discuss the future land use map for the Comprehensive Plan update. The regular April PC meeting will be cancelled.

5. REPORTS:

Zoning Permits:	Permits will be circulated for review.
CRPC:	Mr. Duerr will report to the PC members.
CCMPO Technical Committee:	Ms. Johnson will report to the PC members.

6. RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

At their March 9th meeting, the Board of Supervisors reviewed Tussey Mountain Development of Regional Impact which was forwarded to the Planning Commission.

7. STATUS OF LAND DEVELOPMENT/SUBDIVISION PLANS UNDER REVIEW:

The following plans are currently being reviewed by the Township. If members of the Commission have questions about any of these projects or would like to view the plans, please let Staff know.

- **Rockey Ridge Section 6 Preliminary Subdivision Plan** – Includes 15 building lots on the northeast side of the existing Rocky Ridge development. This plan will have to be reviewed by the Planning Commission prior to consideration by the Board of Supervisors.
- **Rocky Ridge Minor** – This plan proposes a 0.365 acre exchange of land between the open space lot and the remaining undeveloped lands as well as a sidewalk from the existing development to the recently acquired Kaywood Park land connection.
- **Linden Hall Minor Subdivision** – This plan proposes the subdivision of a 12.24-acre lot along Linden Hall Road into two lots (7.5 acres and 4.6 acres).

8. ADJOURNMENT: