

**HARRIS TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2026**

Members in Attendance: Kent Baker, Chair
Peggy Johnson, Vice Chair
Bob Igo
Jeff Duerr
Robert Hoffman
Phill Becker
Maria Spencer – via Zoom @ 7:30
Kelly Wolgast, Alternate – via Zoom
Alexander Schmidbauer, Alternate – via Zoom

Staff in Attendance: Mark Boeckel, Township Manager
Todd Shea, Zoning/Ordinance Enforcement Officer
Debbie Lang, Administrative Secretary – via Zoom

Public in Attendance: Jenna Wargo, Principal Planner Centre Region COG

Public in Attendance via Zoom: Jeff Fredericks

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Baker called the July 20, 2026 meeting of the Harris Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Igo moved to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2026 meeting. Mr. Duerr seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no one present to discuss items not on the agenda.

4. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS:

**A. CENTRE REGION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN—HARRIS TOWNSHIP
FUTURE LAND USE MAP (FLUM) REVIEW:**

Mr. Wargo presented a staff memorandum summarizing both the April 22, 2026, Joint Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Meeting and the Board's subsequent policy direction from the May 11, 2026 meeting.

She said at its May 11, 2026, meeting, the Board of Supervisors confirmed the following policy direction, which the Planning Commission is asked to consider as it formulates its recommendations on the draft FLUM:

- No future growth areas will be designated in the Comprehensive Plan at this time. Updated capacity analysis—incorporating approved but unbuilt dwelling units within the Regional Growth Boundary (RGB)—confirms that Harris Township has sufficient residential capacity to accommodate projected growth through 2045, with approximately 361 potential dwelling units against a projected need of 175 units.
- The Board does not identify a specific need for targeted light industrial/flex uses at this time and prefers to retain flexibility for the remaining vacant non-residential land within the RGB.
- The Board acknowledged the value of establishing criteria for evaluating future RGB/Sewer Service Area (SSA) expansions should conditions change. CRPA has proposed a regional criteria framework for this purpose, as outlined in the memorandum that was attached with the agenda packet.

The group discussed land capacity within the RGB, housing units inside the RGB, and non-residential vacant land. They discussed higher density, affordable housing and land density use. They briefly discussed expanding sewer service to the Shingletown area. They discussed low- and medium-density residential lots and not just having smaller lot but having more density on the lots.

Ms. Wargo also reviewed the Regional Comprehensive Plan and the benefits it provides of having shared land uses between the municipalities.

Following these discussions, Ms. Wargo said she would take the Planning Commission's feedback back to the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) and then the document will be returned to the Board of Supervisors prior to public adoption proceedings.

b. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO REQUIRE PUBLIC NOTIFICATION SIGNAGE FOR SUBDIVISIONS AND LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS:

Mr. Boeckel said at the request of the Planning Commission last month, Staff prepared draft regulations that would be incorporated into the subdivision and land development ordinance. A draft amendment is also proposed to the Planned Residential Development (PRD) section of the zoning ordinance to ensure that any future PRD proposals would also need to comply with the notification requirements. He reviewed the key points of the draft regulations.

Mr. Hoffman moved to forward the draft regulations to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. Mr. Duerr seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. DATA CENTER REGULATIONS:

Mr. Shea said Staff continue to research regulations related to data centers while creating a draft set of standards for consideration as an ordinance amendment. Staff will be attending a data center seminar presented by Penn State on July 30 that appears to include most of the rest of the Centre Region as well.

He said after more consideration, staff no longer favor the conditional use process for data center approvals. Staff believe adding data center use to two zoning districts, General Industrial (I-1) and General Commercial (C-1), as a use-by-right is the cleaner process. Harris Township should be able to concisely articulate the minimum standards that seem appropriate, so adding an additional layer to the process seems unnecessary.

He briefly reviewed a draft document, based heavily on the Cumberland County Planning Department white paper discussed at the May PC meeting. He said for a future meeting, staff will update the draft incorporating any recommended amendments and will report on, and perhaps add to the draft, any additional pertinent ideas learned at the July 30 seminar.

The group discussed the impact of using 100,000 gpd of water and also discussed beneficial reuse, noting beneficial reuse would be preferred. Mr. Shea said these draft regulations are based on what staff has researched and is similar to what College Township has in place. The group also discussed possibly differentiating between daytime and nighttime noise at these data centers.

Following these discussions, it was agreed the item will be brought back to the Planning Commission following the July 30th seminar with any amendments or additional pertinent ideas.

d. AGENDA FOR AUGUST:

Mr. Boeckel said the August agenda could potentially have data center regulations. There are no plans at this time. Since data centers are the only item for August, the Commission may want to consider cancelling the August meeting.

5. REPORTS:

Zoning permits: There were no zoning permits circulated.

CRPC: Mr. Duerr said this group spent most of the meeting discussing the College Township sign ordinance amendment to allow large screens on the stadium. This item was tabled and sent back to College Township to redo the lighting and sound issues.

CCMPO Technical Committee: Ms. Johnson reported that the CCMPO Technical Committee did not meet.

6. RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

The Manager updated the Planning Commission on recent actions by the Board of Supervisors.

7. Chair Baker noted the only Land Development/Subdivision plan under review is the Rocky Ridge Section 6 Preliminary Subdivision Plan.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Ms. Johnson moved to adjourn and Mr. Becker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Boeckel, AICP
Township Manager