HARRIS TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2026

Members in Attendance:	Kent Baker, Chair Peggy Johnson, Vice Chair Bob Igo Jeff Duerr Phill Becker Maria Spencer – via Zoom Kelly Wolgast, Alternate – via Zoom Alexander Schmidbauer, Alternate
Staff in Attendance:	Mark Boeckel, Township Manager Todd Shea, Zoning/Ordinance Enforcement Officer Debbie Lang, Administrative Secretary – via Zoom
Public in Attendance:	Roy Love, D.C. Michael Hetrick
Public in Attendance via Zoom:	Jeff Fredericks

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Baker called the September 21, 2026 meeting of the Harris Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2026 meeting. Mr. Duerr seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 6-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Roy Love of 404 West Main Street provided comment about that development across the street that is being built. He said the first house is being built and there will be a total of 7 houses that are in the $1.5 million to $2 million range. He said the intent of our Planning Commission is to fill the boundary and not go out into the surrounding areas. He said that is obviously what we want to do. He said we also talk a lot about that we want to make more affordable housing. He said the Planning Commission knows that a development that is going to take 750 loads of topsoil to drain correctly is not going to be a development that is going to appeal to anyone except for millionaires or dual income millionaires living there. That certainly doesn't provide any of the kind of idea that we want to bring in an opportunity for people who fit the demographic of Boalsburg. He said part of the criteria for a developer, as a planning committee, they bring in a plan and as long as the plan meets

the regulations, the Planning Commission has no teeth whatsoever. The Planning Commission can't do anything to say this doesn't fit our community because they meet the regulations. He said one of the statements made was that the builder would try to provide and protect as many trees as possible. He said there isn't a single tree left. He said last week they cut down two 200 year old trees that were directly on the property line. He said it was supposed to be removing only the trees that were absolutely necessary. There was no reason for these 200 year old trees to be cut down. He said it seems to him to be a pretty good idea to have the Tree Commission, as part of Harris Township, communicate with the builder before the plan to see what they are going to do. He said he has lived here since 1999 and he would like to have Boalsburg remain wonderful. He expressed concern with the amount of traffic that will be added to our streets with all these new developments. He is concerned that this beautiful place where everyone wants to live is going to go away. He thinks the Planning Commission has to get more teeth somehow to be able to say no to developers. He said we need to ask more from the developers. He said we should ask the developers to contribute to traffic calming when they put in a development. He said unless we add more teeth to our ordinances, the developers will do whatever the hell they want as long as they meet the regulations.

Chair Baker thanked Dr. Love for his comments and said the Planning Commission would keep his comments in mind.

4. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS:

a. <u>DATA CENTER DRAFT ORDINANCE:</u>

Mr. Shea briefly explained previous discussions the Planning Commission has had regarding parameters that seemed appropriate for a data center ordinance in Harris Township. The draft was included with the agenda.

Chair Baker pointed out that the last time the Planning Commission discussed this item, they had concerns regarding noise and the overall water impact these centers would have. The group discussed the centers using recycled water, using their own electricity and the chemicals that would be put into our sewer system. The similarities to fracking was also discussed with the water these centers use. It was also noted there is no mention of a required third party environmental health and safety evaluation that comes in with any proposal. It was also noted that the ordinance should mention testing of emergency generators should not take place on weekends and holidays. The group also briefly discussed landscaping of the mechanical and electrical equipment at these centers.

Staff said they could add the item about water as a recommendation but was not sure if it could be required. Staff agreed to do more research on the concerns mentioned and make any necessary changes to the draft ordinance.

Michael Hetrick said he lives in the Gates and although he has not seen the draft ordinance on data centers, he has looked at other Township ordinances and has noted there are minimal regulations in our ordinances regarding noise. He stated the facilities operate 24/7 and do not shut down. He felt this was an important factor to consider.

Following these discussions, it was the consensus of the Planning Commission that once staff researches their concerns and make adjustments to the proposed draft ordinance, to forward the draft to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

b. OPEN HOUSES FOR PROPOSED VILLAGE ZONING AMENDMENTS:

Mr. Boeckel briefly summarized this item noting in 2024 and 2025, the Planning Commission conducted a comprehensive analysis of land use patterns in Boalsburg and surrounding neighborhoods. As a result of this analysis, the Commission recommended that the Township amend several existing regulations and create a new zoning district (Village Residential) for portions of the village.

He shared the materials staff prepared for these open houses to help inform the public of the Commission's recommendations. He stated his hope is that the Commission cancel their October meeting and host two open houses, one in the daytime and one during an evening, to provide opportunities for interested property owners and residents to participate. Notice will be mailed to all property owners within the potentially affected area.

Mr. Boeckel said he would share these materials with the Commission in advance of the open house meetings. It was also suggested the information be placed on the website and the ability of the public to have virtual input.

It was agreed the open houses would be held on October 26, 2026 at noon and on October 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

c. AGENDA FOR OCTOBER:

Mr. Boeckel said since the October meeting is being cancelled in lieu of the open house meetings, the November meeting will include feedback from the open house meetings and the Commission should work on their 2027 work plan.

5. REPORTS:

Zoning permits: Zoning permits for May, June, July and August were circulated.

CRPC: Mr. Duerr said this group discussed the Patton Township zoning ordinance amendment to add data centers as a conditional use in the Industrial zoning district and discussed data center implications in the Centre Region. He also stated the ARL at Innovation Park project is moving forward and they also discussed the proposed zoning on 200 South Allen Street and raising the height requirement from 45 feet to 75 feet on that side of Beaver Avenue. The CRPC also had more discussion on the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use map which are both moving forward.

CCMPO Technical Committee: Ms. Johnson reported that she was not able to attend this meeting and therefore had no report.

6. RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

The Manager updated the Planning Commission on recent actions by the Board of Supervisors at their August 10th meeting and the September 14th meeting.

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

Chair Baker said the Commission is familiar with the Rockey Rodge Section 6 Preliminary Subdivision Plan. He asked what the King Minor Subdivision Plan was and Mr. Shea explained the plan proposes consolidating two lots in the Hawk Ridge subdivision at the corner of Emma Court and South Academy Street.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Mr. Igo moved to adjourn and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Boeckel, AICP
Township Manager