

**MIDDLESEX TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
July 27, 2026**

START TIME: 7:07 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: 10:43 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

**Tracy Gleim
Larry Claycomb
Robynn Eppley
Jim Gehr
Doug Graham**

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Wes Beard

TOWNSHIP STAFF PRESENT:

**Mark Carpenter, Zoning Officer
Mike Hess, HRG Engineer (Township Consultants for PAX-1 Project)
Zach Zook, Manager/Roadmaster**

Tracy Gleim called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comment was summarized by speakers as below. Names are provided when audible.

Hilda Vasques: 25 Buckeye Lane, Carlisle. Requested planning commission does not approve next phase. Country Club Road damage. Concerned about water clarity. Asks for more transparency.

Jason Bullock: 19 Goldenrod Drive, Carlisle. Asked the board members if they remember taking the oath of office. Board responded they are appointed.

Approval of July 13 minutes: To be reviewed at the end of the meeting.

**TPF 26-12 Discussion and Possible Action on Final Land Development Plan for
Pennsylvania Digital (PAX-1) Data Center Phase 1-B
(BOS action deadline August 5, 2026)
Presenters: Justin Ross (Livic Civil), Andrew Giorgione**

Andrew Giorgione:

Requesting recommended decisions on the two matters including final land development plan for Campus 1. Views, and preliminary land development plan for Campus 3. Justin Ross will provide a construction update, present Campus 1-B. We have revised renderings per request at prior meeting. We will provide answers to several questions from prior meeting. We will review Campus 3 with renderings as presented. Will discuss project, modifications, referrals, and answer questions.

Justin Ross: Construction Update

The applicant recommended that community members visit **pax1campus.com** for construction updates. A quarterly construction schedule, as requested at the previous meeting, will be prepared and posted on the website. A total of 338 workers has worked at the site during the past several months. The project is currently averaging approximately 125 workers per day, with 77% of those workers residing within 50 miles of the site. The applicant stated that efforts are being made to support local labor and jobs in and around Cumberland County. Blasting continued for two days during the prior week, contrary to the schedule presented at the previous meeting. The delay was attributed to weather conditions that pushed the remaining blasting work into the following week. That work has now been completed. Blasting will remain paused until the fall, consistent with permitting requirements for the second campus. Current construction activities include moving material from the center of the site toward the rear, stormwater and pond improvements, and general earthwork. PPL is expected to begin its construction activities shortly.

Final Land Development Plan — Phase 1-B

The Final Land Development Plan for Phase 1-B was presented and was described as substantially the same as the preliminary plan. Updated information was provided, including renderings and details concerning landscaping, towers, the substation, switchyard, and site entrances. The landscaping shown in the renderings represents an approximate 10-year projection, through 2036. Trees are scheduled to be planted in the fall. A request was made to add the high point of Country Club Road to the renderings. The Board also discussed anticipated views of Campus 1 and Campus 2 from the Appalachian Trail.

The Board discussed potential heat generated by the proposed campus. Peer-reviewed studies concerning a facility in Phoenix, Arizona, reportedly found temperatures approximately 1.3 to 1.56 degrees Fahrenheit warmer downwind than upwind, with localized increases reaching approximately four degrees under certain conditions. The effects reportedly extended approximately 100 to 500 meters from the facility.

The applicant clarified that approximately 71% of the 700-acre property would remain non-building and non-pavement area, resulting in nearly 500 acres of undeveloped or pervious land.

Justin Ross addressed concerns regarding biological contamination reported at a Meta facility in Wyoming. He stated that the source of the bacteria at that facility remains unidentified and unresolved, but that the proposed campus differs substantially in its wastewater system and presents a minimal likelihood of similar contamination.

In response to questions regarding wastewater temperature, Mr. Ross stated that discharged water would be held in storage tanks before being conveyed to the treatment plant and would not result in an increased discharge temperature.

The Board asked about the possibility of a catastrophic tank failure near the Conodoguinet Creek. Mr. Ross stated that the tanks would be regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, constructed with dual walls and secondary containment, equipped with monitoring systems, and regularly inspected by the operator.

Doug Graham stated that DEP would require an Emergency Response Action Plan addressing potential emergencies, response procedures, contact information, and operator responsibilities. OSHA would also review applicable emergency-response procedures. The operator would be required to maintain written protocols and records, and DEP could impose penalties for noncompliance.

The Board revisited questions from the previous meeting regarding bird migration, building design, and environmental impacts. The applicant stated that bird strikes are generally associated with building design and reflective glass. The proposed buildings would use primarily nonfunctional architectural glass. Exterior coatings or textured treatments may also be applied to improve visibility for birds and reduce collision risks.

Phase 1-B Waivers and Modifications:

Mr. Ross stated that the requests were materially the same as those presented during preliminary review. The requests included:

1. Modification of plan size and scale requirements under Section 501.A.2.
2. Modification of the location-map scale under Section 501.A.6.
3. Waiver of curb and sidewalk requirements along Country Club Road and PA Data Drive under Section 703.A.10.
4. Waiver of depressed-curb requirements under Section 703.I.4, allowing commercial-style driveway curbing.
5. Waiver of sidewalk connections between campuses and the public right-of-way under Section 707. Sidewalks would be provided within building areas.
6. Modifications to map and exhibit scales in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.
7. Modification of detention-basin side-slope requirements under Stormwater Ordinance Section 303.J.3.
8. Modification allowing stormwater drawdown periods exceeding 48 hours under Sections 303.H.17.
9. Modification of infiltration requirements where infiltration is not feasible, with alternative stormwater controls used where necessary, SWM 303.B.2.

The Board discussed the distinction between waivers and modifications. A waiver eliminates a requirement; a modification satisfies the ordinance purpose through an alternative method. Any motion should identify each request according to the applicant's written submission.

The Board discussed granting the nine requests subject to written justification and notation on the final plan. Any recommendation of approval would also require compliance with the HRG memorandum dated July 8, 2026, subject to HRG review and approval. No deferrals were requested.

The tenant had not yet executed a lease and could not be disclosed. Tenant identification was not required for final land-development approval.

The applicant stated that an active NPDES permit existed when the property was acquired and transferred with the land. Overlapping active permits cannot cover the same property. The permit was modified as phases were added, including PPL work, blasting, water-main extension, Phase 1-A, Phase 1-B, and Campus 2. The same base permit number has been retained through successive modifications. Campus 2 remains under review.

Proposed water-storage capacity would include 10 tanks:

- Six supply-water tanks totaling approximately 2.1 million gallons, each approximately 55 feet high and 84 feet in diameter.
- Two wastewater tanks, each holding approximately 0.88 million gallons and measuring approximately 52 feet high and 56 feet in diameter.
- Two fire-suppression tanks, each holding approximately 150,000 gallons and measuring approximately 30 feet high and 35 feet in diameter.

Final design could change or reduce amount needed. Associated piping would be underground and equipped with pressure gauges and monitoring systems. Material changes during building permitting could require additional Board review or approval.

Appalachian Trail Review Comments:

Discussions were continuing through the Governor's Office of Opportunity and Transformation. The applicant was awaiting further direction concerning resolution of Appalachian Trail issues.

Public Comment:

A resident asked whether community water needs would receive priority over the project's maximum proposed use of 400,000 gallons per day. The applicant stated that the Middlesex Township Municipal Authority would regulate and monitor usage and could prioritize community needs during an emergency.

Noise was modeled to remain within ordinance limits. Post-construction testing would confirm compliance. The developer agreement would require correction or mitigation of violations. The Board of Supervisors was expected to consider the plan on August 5, 2026, and could impose reasonable conditions before recording.

The applicant stated that wastewater would be conveyed to the Carlisle Regional Treatment Plant. Industrial wastewater would require review by the treatment facility, Middlesex Township, the Board of Supervisors, and DEP. Industrial and sanitary wastewater would combine off site.

The campus would use on-site tanks for cooling and fire suppression. Emergency fire demand would be supplied from those tanks rather than directly from the public transmission line. The project had been reviewed with Township fire and emergency-services representatives and the municipal authority.

The site would be served by 500-kilovolt PPL transmission lines. Power would be reduced through substations to 138 kilovolts and then to approximately 34.5 kilovolts for campus distribution.

Approximately 150 acres would be enclosed by fencing. Sound modeling had been submitted with permitting materials. Material equipment changes could require updated modeling. Quieter replacement equipment would generally not require additional review; louder equipment exceeding approved modeling could require amended plans or permits.

Generator emissions would be regulated through a DEP air-quality permit. During a complete outage, most generators would operate, while approximately 10% to 15% might remain offline. Specific diesel-consumption data was unavailable. Air-dispersion modeling would be addressed during DEP permitting, and public hearings could be required depending on the permit type.

The applicant stated that the current study did not evaluate the effect of continuous or low-frequency noise on children's mental health.

Residents raised concerns regarding contaminated wastewater, emergency planning, decommissioning bonds, nondisclosure agreements, water-system capacity, pressure impacts, fire demand, tenant identity, incomplete studies, fencing, diesel emissions, localized heat, low-frequency noise, infrasound, construction truck speeds, road damage, property values, enforcement, transparency, proximity to homes, and the long-term character of the Township.

Residents also questioned whether the project had received preferential treatment, whether stormwater and DEP requirements were sufficient, and whether the approval process was proceeding too quickly. One resident played a recording of construction noise heard at approximately 6:30 a.m. and requested denial. Additional concerns included monthly generator testing, nitrogen-oxide emissions, effects on children, sleep, and livestock, and the absence of a three-dimensional project model. Several residents urged the Board not to recommend approval without stronger protections.

Justin Ross stated that the Phase 1-B plans had been under review for approximately one year and had received extensive scrutiny.

Larry Claycomb explained that the Planning Commission serves as a review and advisory body. Its responsibility is to determine whether the plan complies with applicable zoning, land-development, and stormwater ordinances. The Board of Supervisors has final approval authority. He also noted that failure to act within the statutory review period could result in deemed approval.

TPF 26-12: Jim Gehr moved to recommend approval of TPF 26-12, three waivers and six modifications identified in the HRG review letters dated July 2, and July 8, 2026. Larry Claycomb seconded the motion. Motion approved, 5-0.

Mr. Gehr moved to recommend approval of TPF 26-12 subject to:

1. **Compliance with the Cumberland County Planning Commission Review Report No. P26-369, dated May 20, 2026.**
2. **Compliance with the HRG review letters dated July 2, and July 8, 2026.**
3. **Review of a westward site rendering from the highest point of Country Club Road.**
4. **Confirmation that the Master Developer Agreement and Post-Construction Plan Agreement address security, prohibition of wells, sound and light monitoring, permanent landscaping and maintenance, generator operating hours, and other identified concerns.**

Doug Graham seconded the motion. Motion approved, 4-1 with Robynn Eppley voting Nay.

TPF 25-27 Discussion and Possible Action on Preliminary Land Development Plan for Pennsylvania Digital (PAX-1) Data Center Phase 3.

(BOS action deadline August 5, 2026)

Justin Ross presented the preliminary plan for Campus 3. The campus would contain five buildings, stormwater facilities, water-storage tanks, offices, and a security entrance. The four rear buildings would use a similar prototype and layout.

The plan was redesigned to reduce wetland disturbance from approximately 1.5 acres to 0.338 acres. The applicant would purchase mitigation credits equal to three times the disturbed area from the completed 18-acre Codorus Creek Mitigation Project in York County. Approximately 32,000 trees were planted as part of that restoration project.

An existing pipe and culvert crossing the wetland would be relocated subject to DEP approval. The applicant stated that a wooded area and hedgerow separate the campus from the adjoining property and that additional landscaping would be installed. A PPL right-of-way also crosses the area.

The applicant reviewed 12 requested waivers, modifications, and deferrals involving plan and exhibit scales, easement descriptions, curbs, sidewalks, driveway entrances, environmental-assessment exhibits, stormwater drawdown periods, basin slopes, and road improvements. A detailed waiver and modification letter was requested for review by the Board of Supervisors.

All 16 buildings were designed to comply with façade standards applicable within the 1,000-foot setback area.

Mike Hess stated that final review would address zoning compliance, fencing, ADA access, grading, lighting, noise, municipal-authority approval, the DEP planning module, sight distance, sidewalks, stormwater management, Country Club Road improvements, security, and financial guarantees. Lighting would generally be limited to 20 feet.

Each development phase would be governed by a supplement to the original Developer's Agreement. Financial security would increase as additional work was approved. It was noted that Pennsylvania law does not currently authorize decommissioning bonds specifically for data centers.

Jim Gehr requested to know the total amount anticipated Clean and Green rollback taxes for the entire project. The applicant agreed to provide the information at a future meeting.

Elizabeth Grant questioned whether overnight lighting levels complied with SALDO requirements. The applicant stated that lighting would be reduced during off-peak hours, motion sensors would activate lighting when movement was detected, and warmer dark-sky-compliant lighting would be considered.

Public Comment:

Earl Beam, 303 Country Club Road. Trucks are still dropping stones and debris on Country Club Road. Trucks do not observe speed limit. Generator use and air quality.

Barb Simpson, 26 Teaberry Dr. Water capacity for the data center vs. 1400 formerly proposed homes. Concerns about the noise on mental health.

Viola Byerly, 263 Country Club Road. The residents must live with the consequences of the board's decision. Trucks are damaging roads; the noise is beyond what was promised. What protections are in place for the residents.

Kyle Gerber, 585 Bernheisel Bridge Road. The choices made tonight will damage our way of life. The ordinances were put in place by the developer's attorney. The board is entrusted with the quality of our air and water.

Viola Byerly, 262 Country Club Road. Discussed excessive noise.

Arlene Darlington, 7509 Wertzville Road. Has there been a study for infrasound, low frequency waves below 20 Hz. She believes this will affect our children, our wildlife, and the residents.

Andrew Dymski, 430 Bernheisel Bridge. Believes the project is moving far too quickly yet exceeds building norms and ordinances for the area. Land disturbances, wetland concerns. Wastewater, sound monitoring, height of buildings. Change of use questions.

Jody Shivell, 8 Teaberry Drive. Noise concerns out her window. Quality of life in her home and her yard with her children and grandchildren. Far too much noise. Data centers should not be near residential areas. Generators should have less noise and not diesel.

Steven Hutton, 28 Teaberry Drive. Discussed trees and retention ponds.

Arlene Darlington, 7509 Wertzville Road. PA Constitution protects our air and water.

Residents raised concerns regarding industrial wastewater, the number and capacity of water tanks, water storage, daily water use, potential well damage from blasting, cooling-system maintenance, and protection and monitoring of a bald eagle nest.

TPF 25-27: Doug Graham moved to recommend approval of TPF 25-27 with the 12 waivers, modifications, and deferrals identified on page 2 of the HRG letter dated July 9, 2026. Jim Gehr seconded the motion. Motion approved, 5-0.

Mr. Graham moved to recommend approval of TPF 25-27 subject to compliance with the Cumberland County Planning Commission review comments, the HRG memorandum dated July 9, 2026, and completion of a road-improvement plan before final approval. Jim Gehr seconded the motion. Motion approved, 5-0.

The Commission directed that the prior meeting minutes be revised to separate the waiver motion from the plan-approval motion and to summarize presentations, public concerns, and actions taken.

Robynn Eppley moved to adjourn. Larry Claycomb seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 p.m.

FORMAL ACTIONS

MOTION	MOVED BY	SECONDED BY	VOTE	ACTION
Motion to recommend approval of TPF 26-12, Final Land Development Plan for Phase 1-B, including the three waivers and six modifications identified in the HRG review letters dated June 8, July 2, and July 8, 2026.	Jim Gehr	Larry Claycomb	5-0	Motion carried.
Motion to recommend approval of TPF 26-12, subject to compliance with Cumberland County Planning Commission Review Report No. P26-369, dated May 20, 2026; the HRG review letters dated June 8, July 2, and July 8, 2026; submission of a westward rendering from the highest point of Country Club Road; and satisfactory execution of the Master Developer Agreement and Post-Construction Plan Agreement addressing security, wells, sound and light monitoring, landscaping, generator operating hours, and other identified concerns.	Jim Gehr	Doug Graham	4-1	Motion carried.
Motion to recommend approval of TPF 25-27, Preliminary Land Development Plan for Campus 3, including the 12 waivers, modifications, and deferrals identified on page 2 of the HRG review letter dated July 9, 2026.	Doug Graham	Jim Gehr	5-0	Motion carried.
Motion to recommend approval of TPF 25-27, subject to compliance with Cumberland County Planning Commission Review Report No. P25-1177; the conditions contained in the HRG memorandum dated July 9, 2026; and completion of a road-improvement plan before final plan approval.	Doug Graham	Jim Gehr	5-0	Motion carried.
Motion to adjourn.	Robynn Eppley	Larry Claycomb	Unanimous	Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:43 p.m.

Date Approved: __8-10-2026__