

ROSS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING
JULY 21, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

The Ross Township Planning Commission Meeting, for July 21, 2026, was called to order by Chairman Howard Beers at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Township Municipal Building.

ROLLCALL:

These members were present:

Howard Beers, Chairman
Thomas Wagner, Secretary
Keith Noble Jr.
Kevin Overfield
Vincent Delhery
Eric Longenbach

Members not present were:

Lauri Lapping, Vice Chairman

Also present were:

Tighe Meckes, Keystone Consulting Engineers,
Solicitor Michael Gaul, King Spry Law Firm,
Karen Orlando, Recording Secretary,
Zachary Karasek, Arro Consulting, Inc.
and members of the public

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

June 16, 2026 meeting minutes

Motion: Motion to approve June 16, 2026 meeting minutes as presented was made by Thomas Wagner, Secretary and seconded by Vincent Delhery.

Motion Carried: 6-0.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

1) 1889 Kunkletown Road – Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan – 10/05/26 Deadline.

Neither the applicant nor their representative was present. A motion was made to move this to the next meeting.

Motion: A motion to table the proposed 1889 Kunkletown Rd. Plan until the next meeting was made by Vincent Delhery and seconded by Keith Noble Jr.

Motion Carried: 6-0.

2) Gateway Industrial – Final Land Development Plan – 9/8/26 Deadline

Martin Smith of Pany & Lentz, representing the developer, was not present.

Attorney Gaul reported that he and Russ Kresge of Keystone Consulting Engineers had discussed the status and review schedule of the Gateway Industrial Final Land Development Plan. They agreed that it would be premature to recommend conditional approval and forward the plan to the Board of Supervisors at this time because several significant issues remain unresolved. In addition, approvals and comments from outside agencies are still pending and will affect the Township's review of the project.

Mr. Meckes completed a stormwater review, and several items remain contingent upon comments and determinations from federal and regulatory agencies. Attorney Gaul explained that the Township cannot fully evaluate certain requirements until those outside agency reviews are completed. As a result, Township representatives met with Gateway representatives to discuss expectations and the review process moving forward. Gateway agreed that advancing the plan at this stage would be premature.

Gateway representatives indicated that they do not intend to seek Planning Commission recommendation or Board of Supervisors consideration until Conservation District comments are received and reviewed. Based on the projected timeline, Conservation District review comments are not expected until early October. Gateway will continue addressing comments from the Township's engineering reviews, including general engineering, stormwater, and traffic reviews, before returning to the Planning Commission.

Attorney Gaul requested that the applicant extend the review period through December 31, 2026. He explained that the prior extension, which expired on September 8, 2026, did not provide sufficient time for proper review and Board action. Extending the deadline to the end of the year will allow additional time for agency reviews, plan revisions, and consideration by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

According to the projected schedule, Gateway may submit revised plans to the Township Engineers by September 1, 2026, to address outstanding comments. The applicant resubmitted materials to the Conservation District on July 10, 2026. If the review process proceeds as anticipated, Conservation District comments could be received in October, allowing revised plans to be reviewed by the Planning Commission in November and potentially considered by the Board of Supervisors in December.

Planning Commission member Eric Longenbach raised concerns regarding the proposed site access and traffic circulation, particularly the location of truck and employee entrances, turning movements involving tractor-trailers, and potential sight-distance issues near the Route 33 interchange. Members discussed concerns about vehicles making left turns, the lack of a southbound turning lane, and the potential safety hazards associated with truck traffic at the site entrance. Attorney Gaul noted that access permitting ultimately falls under PennDOT's authority, although the Township's traffic review identified similar concerns and PennDOT has been copied on those review comments. Members also inquired about comments from neighboring municipalities, including Wind Gap.

The Commission further discussed site grading and excavation requirements. Attorney Gaul explained that the building elevation had been lowered to help balance cut and fill operations on the property. He noted that the project will require substantial retaining walls. The developer will need to provide the Township with Engineer-verified design plans for the retaining walls as part of the building permit process.

Motion: Motion to recommend that the Supervisors approve Gateway Industrial's extension request to December 31, 2026 was made by Vincent Delhery and seconded by Kevin Overfield.

Motion Carried: 4-1 with 1 opposed

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Schultheis/Lobb - Mount Eaton Rd - Minor Subdivision Plan - Revised Submission - 10/6/26 Deadline.

Zachary Karasek of Arro Consulting, Inc. presented the revised minor subdivision plan, noting that the proposal would divide one parcel into two lots. He explained that, because the applicants intend to construct a residence immediately, the project is being reviewed similarly to land development. Mr. Karasek reviewed comments received from Keystone Consulting Engineers and discussed several outstanding review items.

Discussion focused on a zoning-related comment concerning earth disturbance exceeding 20,000 square feet and whether the applicant would pursue relief through the Zoning Hearing Board or proceed through Monroe County Conservation District erosion and sediment control review. Township representatives advised that comments from the Zoning Officer and Sewage Enforcement Officer were still pending. The Commission also discussed a Monroe County Planning Commission comment regarding lot width

measurements and whether the proposed lot met ordinance requirements. Township Engineer Tighe Meckes indicated that his review showed the lot appeared to comply, subject to confirmation by the Zoning Officer.

The Commission then discussed whether the project should be processed as a preliminary/final plan and whether the proposed access should be treated as a driveway or a private access street under the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). Mr. Meckes noted that the determination could affect plan classification and improvement guarantee requirements. Attorney Gaul stated that he wanted to review the matter further but believed improvements serving the proposed homes should ultimately be completed or secured.

Mr. Karasek explained that the proposed access complies with the SALDO provisions for private access serving up to three homes and remaining under the maximum permitted length. The applicant intends to provide additional plan details, including a roadway profile and a table demonstrating compliance with applicable ordinance requirements. The Commission also reviewed proposed paving improvements, including an alternative design previously discussed that would pave the first 50 feet of access and increase the stone depth beyond that point. Members discussed whether the proposal met ordinance requirements and the potential precedent of such an alternative design could be established for future applications.

Mr. Karasek reported that planning module materials had been submitted to the Township Sewage Enforcement Officer and that revised documents would be provided due to file-access issues. He also noted that comments remain outstanding from the Zoning Officer and that questions remain regarding a developer's agreement, performance guarantees, and security for required improvements, including stormwater management best management practices (BMPs). Attorney Gaul explained the importance of securing required improvements to protect future property owners and avoid potential Township liability if improvements are not completed.

The applicant also provided an update on discussions with PennDOT regarding access to the proposed lot. Mr. Karasek stated that PennDOT had not expressed concerns with the concept of the access location, although additional work may be necessary to clear vegetation or adjust the location to allow proper sight-distance measurements. Chairman Beers requested that proposed access and permit information be identified on future submissions.

Attorney Gaul and Mr. Meckes discussed stormwater review comments. Mr. Meckes indicated that the overall stormwater concept appeared acceptable but that additional calculations, drainage area information, and supporting data were still needed before a final recommendation could be made. The discussion also included existing drainage patterns, discharge points, nearby wetlands, and the potential involvement of the Conservation District in reviewing erosion and sediment control measures.

Mr. Karasek stated that the applicant intends to address Township, zoning, sewage, engineering, and Conservation District comments before the next meeting. When asked whether further guidance was needed, he indicated that clarification regarding performance guarantees would be helpful. Attorney Gaul responded that he and the Township Engineer would review the issue and provide a recommendation at a future meeting, noting that it would not delay the plan review process.

Motion: Thomas Wagner moved to table the Schultheis/Lobb Minor Subdivision Plan until the August meeting. The motion was seconded by Keith Noble Jr.

Motion Carried: 6-0

2. Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment – One principal use limitation

Chairman Beers asked if everyone had a chance to review the Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment.

Motion: Motion to recommend that the Supervisors approve the Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment was made by Thomas Wagner, Secretary, and seconded by Vincent Delhery.

Motion Carried: 5-1 with 1 person abstaining

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Joanne Aruta addressed the Planning Commission to clarify comments contained in a letter previously submitted by her and her husband when they were unable to attend the prior meeting. Ms. Aruta explained that she had mistakenly referred to a portion of property as commercial or general commercial when discussing proposed zoning designations. After consulting with Mr. Dashon of Strategic Solutions, she learned that the area from her property line to Meixsell Valley Road is designated residential and acknowledged that her earlier statement had been incorrect.

Ms. Aruta further clarified that her concern relates to the area extending from Meixsell Valley Road to Flyte Road as identified on the updated CJERP map. She stated that she supports retaining the Village Commercial designation for that area, noting that it has historically been zoned that way despite the presence of residential homes. She indicated that she wanted the Commission to have an accurate understanding of her position and the intent of her previous correspondence.

Ms. Aruta thanked the members of the Planning Commission for their service and expressed appreciation for the time and effort they contribute as volunteers.

PENDING:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Motion: Motion to adjourn was made by Thomas Wagner, Secretary and seconded by Keith Noble Jr.

Motion Carried: 6-0

Next Meeting: August 18, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Orlando
Recording Secretary