

ROSS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

MONTHLY MEETING

October 21, 2025

The Ross Township Planning Commission Meeting, scheduled for October 21, 2025, was called to order by Chairman Roger Christman at 7:00pm. The meeting was held at the Township Municipal Building.

In attendance were the following Planning Commission Members: Chairman Roger Christman, Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell, Lauri Lapping, Roger Green Jr, Herb Stecker, David Labar and Frank Piraino Jr.

Also in attendance were Attorney Michael Gaul, Planning Commission Solicitor from the King Spry Law Firm, Attorney Kevin Brinker, of the King Spry Law Firm, and Township Engineer Russ Kresge, from Keystone Consulting Engineers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2025 meeting as presented was made by Herb Stecker and seconded by Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Gateway Industrial – Lot Consolidation Plan & Land Development Plan

Martin Smith was present as a representative for the project's applicant. He stated there was also owner representation present.

Mr. Smith stated the Lot Consolidation would be to take the three current parcels and consolidate them into one lot for the proposed Land Development. He also stated they were in receipt of a review letter from the Township Engineer for which they had been addressing comments and were looking for a recommendation of approval for the Lot Consolidation Plan that evening to go before the Board of Supervisors for final approval.

Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated all his previous comments had been addressed and that he would suggest the Lot Consolidation Plan be recommended for approval with the only remaining item being that all certificates were signed prior to reaching the Board of Supervisors. Attorney Gaul asked Township Engineer Russ Kresge if he thought the drainage and utility easements needed to be shown on the Lot Consolidation Plan to which Mr. Kresge answered it would only be if the easements were previously listed, but that they would not normally be created for a Lot Consolidation.

Attorney Gaul asked about adding to the Plan about the consolidation not impacting prior easements and that the lots could not be separated again without Municipal approval. He read from Section 704 in regards to language that could be used to be added. Attorney Gaul then asked if there had been an MCPC review of the Lot Consolidation Plan. It was stated the plan had been reviewed in tandem with the Land Development Plan, but there were no separate letter or comments.

Attorney Gaul then asked Mr. Smith if the Quit Claim Deed had been completed to cover the one property that had not been previously identified by parcel number. Mr. Smith answered it had been done and that a pin number had been assigned to have the Quit Claim Deed recorded. Attorney Gaul also confirmed with Mr. Smith that all prior easements had been listed for the plan.

Attorney Gaul stated he no objections to the Planning Commission recommending approval of the Lot Consolidation Plan to the Board of Supervisors and offered to provide language for stating the consolidation would not alter or impact any existing easements on the property if the Planning Commission would choose to adopt that recommendation. Chairman Roger Christman asked about a Lot Joiner not eliminating any existing easements and Attorney Gaul stated it shouldn't, but adding a note would help to eliminate any future confusion.

Chairman Roger Christman asked if there were any further questions or comments on the Land Consolidation Plan.

Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell made a motion to recommend approval of the Lot Consolidation Plan subject to the addition of a note that the Plan will not impact any previous easements by deed, and payment of the Township's professional fees. The motion was seconded by Roger Green Jr and carried unanimously.

Attorney Gaul stated, for the record, the others present for the Gateway Industrial Project included retired Judge Zito as Counsel along with Chris Perucci and Mike Duffey. Mr. Smith stated another person in attendance was John Wishner who is their Traffic Engineer.

Next, the Gateway Industrial Land Development Plan was discussed and copies were disbursed amongst the Planning Commission to review.

Mr. Smith stated the Land Development Plan, under the assumption the Lot Consolidation Plan is approved, would lead to the proposed construction of a 306,000 sqft warehouse building with all of the proposed work being completed within the Ross Township portion of the property even though the Ross and Hamilton Township boundary crossed through the parcel. Along with the building, there would also be employee parking at either end, a rear truck court, a primary truck access driveway to the east side of the property and another driveway which would only have access to the employee lot. There also would be a stormwater management basin to collect stormwater on site for spray irrigation and the project would work to follow Township Ordinances in regards to wetlands present on the property. Mr. Smith continued with stating there is a Met-Ed line that crosses the property that is proposed to be relocated throughout the construction process and they have had preliminary scoping meetings with PennDOT to work on submission for the HOP.

Mr. Smith stated they received the letter from the Township Engineer dated October 16th in regards to the Land Development Plan along with another letter dated October 17th from the Township Traffic Engineer. He confirmed again the Plans had been submitted to the Monroe County Planning Commission for review back on July 25th and they have also submitted to CJERP to which they have received email communication on their review, but are awaiting a formal letter. Copies of the Plan were also submitted to the Fire Department to which they will follow up for any questions or concerns. He finished with stating there was only one review comment they had a question on about how to approach, but are working to comply with all other items.

Attorney Gaul asked how they would like to proceed as there were items that had not yet been applied for or that may still be pending. These items included the Sewage Planning Module, HOP and NPDES Permit. He then asked if they were looking for preliminary approval while the items were still pending or if they would be looking to have the Plan tabled until all items were complete. Mr. Smith stated he would be unable to obtain a NPDES Permit without a preliminary plan so they would be looking for a

preliminary plan approval. He further stated that Sewage Facility Planning Module had been recently submitted to Ross Township, Hamilton Township and MCPC to be signed off on.

When asked about the HOP, Mr. Smith stated their Traffic Engineer could answer questions, but that they are still unable to move forward with only a Preliminary Plan so they are following the steps of the review process to be able to move forward towards a Final Plan submission.

Attorney Gaul confirmed they are looking for Preliminary Plan approval with the condition the discussed items would be completed for the Final Plan before any construction work could be completed. He then asked Township Engineer Russ Kresge if the items were consistent with his review letter and Engineer Russ Kresge answered it was part of normal procedure to receive a vested interest from a Preliminary Plan along with conditional approval for items to be reviewed and completed before a Final Plan submission and approval.

Attorney Gaul asked if there were any other major items to be addressed from the Engineer's Review Letter outside of the Sewage Planning Module, HOP and NPDES Permit. Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated those covered the first three comments and that the Subdivision Ordinance states that the module only needs to be submitted to the Township prior to Preliminary Approval.

Attorney Gaul stated there were Plan notes that would need to be revised including addressing the ambiguity of who is responsible for stormwater management and that he would be willing to review and offer a redline if they would provide a Word document covering such. The landowner would be responsible for stormwater management regardless of whether the Landowner hired a contractor or operator to do the work, which Mr. Smith acknowledged. He also stated there would need to be clarification of dedications in the listed Owner Statement of Acknowledgement, which was inconsistent with the language in the SALDO, and because his understanding was that the Township did not intend to take dedication of any improvements. He did expect that the Township would require an easement for access to the stormwater facilities, and that a Stormwater Management Agreement would be required.

Mr. Smith then addressed the one comment they had a question on which was #9 in regards to the employee parking lot. Their count resulted in a need for 152 parking spaces which are all shown on the Plan with the intent to build them all at once. Under the Township Ordinance, there is a guideline to only build a percentage of the spaces, 117 in this case, and leave the remaining area reserved. Mr. Smith stated they would be willing to do this as well, but it would be easier to build all the lots at once, but they could do the reserved space and look for recommendation on how best to then proceed.

Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated the decision for the parking spaces would ultimately be up to the Board of Supervisors to resolve, but that he would recommend for them to permit them to complete the full parking lot initially. Mr. Smith said they would be willing to complete whatever process they would need for approval of this. Chairman Roger Christman asked where the reserve would be if it would be required. Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated the full build out would need to be listed, but that a section would just not be paved.

Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell stated he had some questions. His first question was if the property would be gated with a guard or just open access. Mr. Smith stated he was unsure as there is no current user at this time who would be the one to make that operation decision. They have had both options in other previous projects as it varies site to site. Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell then asked who would be responsible for maintaining the condition of the property after build out. It would take significant work to maintain the appearance of the property including landscaping. Mr. Smith stated the property owner 978373858.1

has an active maintenance group who be in charge of such items. When asked if the property would be fenced, Mr. Smith stated it was unknown at this time, aside from the required fencing for the retaining wall and around the detention basin.

Chairman Roger Christman then returned to the discussion of the 152 parking spaced needed versus 117 parking spaces if they were required to have a reserved area. After multiple discussions amongst the Planning Commission in regards to requirements and access to the lots, Attorney Gaul asked the Planning Commission what they would like to do. Howard Beers, who was in attendance, asked if they were taking any Public Comment. Attorney Gaul stated there would be Public Comment later unless the Chairman wanted to take comments now, to which Chairman Roger Christman agreed.

Mr. Beers stated his question was in regards to if the facility would be served by Pennsylvania American Water and Mr. Smith answered it would be as there is a main running through the property. He also stated the flow and pressure were not adequate for fire protection so they will also have a fire tank in the back. Mr. Beers also asked about a block on the Plan map and Mr. Smith answered it would be a maintained green space in front of the building.

Chairman Roger Christman then brought the discussion back to the number of parking spaces and asked for the Planning Commission's thoughts for which they were in agreement to have all of the spaces completed at one time. Roger Green Jr made a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors to allow for the full parking lot to be completed at one time. The motion was seconded by David Labar, and carried unanimously.

Chairman Roger Christman stated he had a question in regards to a comment from the Township Traffic Engineer about snow removal off the top of trucks. Mr. Smith stated they had not yet picked out an area as there was not an operator at this time, but they had the drive through scrapers at other facilities. An item such as this would be near the exit and then the snow would be moved to another area on the property.

When asked if Township Engineer Russ Kresge had any other items to discuss he stated there were not many other items as the applicant had agreed to address all items. Attorney Gaul stated, for the process, typically the next step would be for the applicant to file a revised plan addressing comments of the Township Engineer for the Planning Commission to review at the next meeting. Lauri Lapping asked about the timeline for the Final Plan if they conditionally approved a Preliminary Plan and if it would put them on a time crunch. Attorney Gaul stated with an unconditional Preliminary Plan approval, there is protection for 5 years as long as a Final Plan is submitted that is consistent with conditions that had been listed. A new application would then be submitted for the Final approval. Mr. Smith stated, for their timeline, if the Planning Commission were to recommend preliminary approval to move to the Board of Supervisors, their intent would be to be able to submit a Final Plan as soon as they possibly could to keep the process moving.

Attorney Gaul then asked about the impact on the stormwater analysis if all of the parking spots were paved. Mr. Smith stated they have the design for if all were paved so all have been accounted for either way. The only impact would be how it was shown on the Plan.

Chairman Roger Christman then asked for Secretary Melissa Monaco to enter the room to confirm when the current extension was through for Gateway Industrial. The extension was confirmed to be through December 1st. Mr. Smith stated their intent was to be able to present a Preliminary Plan for the November Board of Supervisors Meeting or they would then have to request another time extension.

Attorney Gaul stated if there were to be a recommendation for approval made this evening, the conditions would need to include satisfactorily addressing the comments of the Township Engineer's review letter dated October 16th and the Traffic Engineer's letter dated October 17th along with comments from the Monroe County Planning Commission. When Attorney Gaul asked if the comments from the MCPC were covered in Township Engineer Russ Kresge's letter, it was stated comment 14F lists several of the MCPC comments.

Attorney Gaul stated there was a response that was part of the resubmission in regards to the MCPC comments which included items such as adequate driver accommodations be provided for overnight parking. Mr. Smith stated there was no intent for trucks to remain overnight as the facility will just be a warehouse with trucks coming and going. The next comment addressed was comment 9 for ice scraper stations, which they agreed would be provided.

Attorney Gaul then referred to the "open space" that would be undeveloped area of the project. Mr. Smith stated he had been unsure how else to indicate on the Plan. Attorney Gaul confirmed there was nothing listed in the Plan that would make it a restricted area and then asked if there was an open space requirement. Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated there is a requirement, but there could be a fee in lieu of the requirement. However, there is not a fee in the Fee Schedule for a non-residential area. Attorney Gaul asked if the Planning Commission would be concerned of there being any further development. Mr. Smith stated land left in the Hamilton Township portion was restricted under an environmental protection district that would not allow for additional development.

Attorney Gaul then reiterated the conditions that would be listed for recommendation of approval for the Preliminary Plan would include satisfactorily addressing comments of the two engineer letters, addressing the Township Solicitor's comments of the Plan notes and payment of Township Professional fees. He then stated when the Final Plan is approved, there will also need to be cost estimates, an improvement agreement, stormwater agreement, indemnity agreement if PennDOT requires any Township involvement and financial security. Mr. Smith acknowledged these requirements.

Chairman Roger Christman asked if there were any further comments or questions.

Lauri Lapping made a motion to recommend conditional approval of the Plan to the Board of Supervisors provided they meet the conditions of satisfactorily addressing the KCE Engineer letter dated October 16th, KCE Traffic letter dated October 17th and Planning Commission Solicitor's comments on the Plan Notes, along with payment of professional fees. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Rick, Meixsell and carried unanimously.

Minor Subdivision – 185 Hemlock Lane

Mark Leuthe of Lehigh Engineering Associates and the applicant Tighe Scott were present for the meeting and stated this was a proposed Final Plan submission for a Minor Subdivision and Lot Line Adjustment. They had received an Engineer Review letter dated October 16th to which he stated most revisions have been completed and he agreed with the Township Engineer to receive a review letter from the Monroe County Planning Commission. He stated they were willing to comply with other comments as they had previously made most adjustments to comply with the September 30th review letter.

Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated most items were straightforward with a couple to be discussed including Comment 6 in reference to the turn around of Hemlock Lane which shown as a right of way

which would lead to adjustments to be made for the proposed lot 1 to be a total of 30 acres to adjust for the 0.2180 acres lost.

Township Engineer Russ Kresge then stated for Comment 11, there would be a change in access to the parcels with Hemlock Lane passing through as a private road. Mr. Leuthe stated the intent would be for the Scott family to not have to pass over the other lots and access would be available between Hemlock and Piper.

Chairman Roger Christman asked about the building shown in the R1 section on the Monroe County GIS record that had been provided. Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated he included the comment so that the building would be shown for the Plan as it would become property of the new owner. Mr. Scott stated the building is only a pole barn that has no electric, water or sewer that had only been rented for storage for a local slate business, but that they would be out for the end of the year.

Township Engineer Russ Kresge then stated for the other 2 acre lot, the lot lines would be going away and the parcel would be absorbed into proposed lot 1. Attorney Gaul confirmed that they were aware that all of the lots would need to be in the same name to be consolidated. Mr. Leuthe responded he thought a way existed to work through the requirement prior to recording and that it may all go into the new owner's name. Attorney Gaul stated it would need to be completed before recording of the Plan so the Tax Assessment and Recorder offices would be able to process the Plan and also stated it would be a comment that should be left to be addressed for now. Mr. Leuthe then explained the items to Mr. Scott.

Mr. Beers stated he had a question on the Zoning District with the Northside of Hemlock Lane being R1, but the Southside being SC and asked about if special delineation needed to be listed for the Plan. Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated it was represented as a dotted line on the Plan that went along the road and it was shown where each of the lines were on the map.

Mr. Leuthe then reiterated he was fine with the letter received from Township Engineer Russ Kresge and that they would work to make the requested revisions along with working on a logistical solution for recording.

Attorney Gaul confirmed with the lot consolidation, and lot line adjustment, that there would be no carry over of any cross easements. He also confirmed the applicant would need to receive MCPC review, address some comments on the Plan notes, research items with the cul-de-sac and make necessary acreage adjustments from what the Township owned.

Attorney Gaul asked if the Zoning Officer made any reviews for compliance. Mr. Leuthe stated he had not received anything from Zoning. Attorney Gaul stated while he did not believe there would be any issues, he still recommended for the applicant to speak with the Zoning Officer to verify all were in agreement.

Attorney Gaul stated they would expect for the pro forma deeds to be submitted for the Township Solicitor and the Ordinance required that the confirming deeds be recorded within 30 days plan recording. He then asked if all easements were listed in the deed description that had been placed on the Plan. Mr. Leuthe stated if an easement was referenced, it was added to the Plan.

Attorney Gaul stated if the Planning Commission would like to grant a recommendation of approval to the Board of Supervisors, conditions should include satisfactorily addressing comments from the Township Engineer's Review Letter dated October 16th and comments from the Planning Commission 978373858.1

Solicitor on Plan notes, receiving a letter and satisfactorily addressing items from the Monroe County Planning Commission and payment of Township Professional fees.

Township Engineer Russ Kresge stated, to make clear for everyone about property access, that Lot 1 would only have access from the turnaround. Mr. Leuthe confirmed there would be no access issues for the properties even though they would lose one of the current access points.

Attorney Gaul asked if there were any concerns and stated it is primarily a lot line adjustment, with combining two properties on one side. Any future subdivisions would need to comply with the SALDO.

Lauri Lapping made a motion to recommend approval of the Plan conditioned on the applicant satisfactorily addressing comments of the KCE Review Letter dated October 16th, satisfactorily addressing the Planning Commission Solicitor's comments about Plan notes, receiving and satisfactorily addressing Monroe County Planning Commission letter, payment of Township professional fees and extinguishing any cross easements between the properties. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell, and carried unanimously.

Data Center Zoning Amendment & Solar Commercial Facilities Zoning Amendment

Chairman Roger Christman asked if everyone had reviewed the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments for the Data Center Zoning and Solar Commercial Facilities. He then asked if there were any comments for the Board of Supervisors, as there had been no changes to the original drafts received. Lauri Lapping asked if they intended to make changes and Chairman Roger Christman responded that the Board of Supervisors had tabled the discussion.

Attorney Gaul confirmed he had sent some technical comments on draft issues to the Township Solicitor in case the Board wanted to resubmit the proposed Ordinances expeditiously, but he had had a response to his comments, and was not aware of whether revised drafts had been resubmitted, and that, when they Planning Commission had last met, Secretary Melissa Monaco had also not received any further items.

Chairman Roger Christman stated there were spelling errors in the ordinance and the Solar Ordinance contained blanks for the Zoning Districts in which they would be allowed. Attorney Gaul stated that Solar Farm regulations were already contained in the Zoning Ordinance. As a result, they would need to be deleted so there were not two sets of regulations. This would not be a big issue, but there being blanks as to the applicable zoning districts was an issue. Currently Solar is permitted in one area by right and another by special exception which would be changed to conditional use. He anticipated most municipalities would opt to permit them to be built within an industrial zoning district, but that there was not one available.

Attorney Gaul stated the decision would need to be made and filled in for where the Solar Farms would be allowed. He also stated he could respond on other technical items to be addressed for the ordinance, but would need the Planning Commission's comments on where they should be located.

For Data Centers, there were comments from the Monroe County Planning Commission about considering setting a maximum percentage of woodlands that could be removed to better preserve the natural environment and prevent stormwater problems. The percentage would need to be decided. Chairman Roger Christman stated he was at a Zoning Hearing Board for Solar that would not allow more than 40% of trees in an area, but they had wanted to remove 80% and then replant. It would need to be

considered removing mature trees and replacing with smaller trees which could require an equation to be created to determine a proper replacement ratio.

Attorney Gaul stated it would come down to either having a perfect ordinance to start or to have something in place to be able to update later. Chairman Roger Christman stated the Board wanted to put something in place as soon as possible, but that there had been no further progress had been made to revise and adopt the ordinances.

Chairman Roger Christman stated another comment was in regards to the GC zoning district being a small area that is already built up. Lauri Lapping asked about not being able to list just General Commercial and asked about if it would be possible to combine General and Village Commercial if that would be too small. Chairman Roger Christman stated there could be an overlay recommending the western area of the GC area and then into an adjoining area to gain more land without pinpointing a specific zone. It was discussed about Village Commercial and all the uses that had been assigned to that district which may not allow enough space for others to be added.

Frank Piraino Jr asked if the infrastructure would be able to handle the power and water needs. One or more Planning Commission members stated the existing infrastructure did not seem sufficient. Chairman Roger Christman talked about an eight-foot-tall fence around the perimeter of the properties, but stated the fence should be inside the property. It was also stated that the only public water companies were PA American Water and AquaPA.

When asked what sort of comments should be provided to the Board of Supervisors, Attorney Gaul stated the Planning Commission could make a motion recommending to adopt, not adopt or adopt with suggestions. If recommending to adopt, it could be noted it would be beneficial to include comments received from the Monroe County Planning Commission along with technical revisions from the Planning Commission Solicitor on drafting issues.

Lauri Lapping asked if other Townships would be open to shared use and Attorney Gaul stated they probably would be, but that it would take a while to reach that point as all would have to adopt new Zoning Ordinance amendments that had the same language. Lauri Lapping then asked for clarification on MCPC Comment 6. Attorney Gaul stated typically accessory uses are analyzed as part of the principal uses for purposes of the Zoning rules. An issue would be with the power generation that would be an accessory use to a Data Center could be equivalent to a whole power plant so it makes sense that the power generation should be considered another principal use, and not simply an accessory use.

Comment 4 was stated to be in regards to visual controls for the external building to set earthtone colors and correct spelling errors. The comment about setting a maximum removal of trees was reiterated and Attorney Gaul stated he agreed for the black coated chain link fence should be interior and that parking requirements should be clarified.

Lauri Lapping asked if these requirements would be enough of a deterrent for these centers to go elsewhere if the current ordinance was adopted. Attorney Gaul stated it would be consistent with the General Commercial Zoning District, but that it would be up to the Board of Supervisors though they had not responded to recent comments from the Planning Commission.

After clearing other comments from the MCPC Letter, Lauri Lapping confirmed Comments 3 through 8 would be those to be recommended be incorporated into the Ordinance.

Lauri Lapping made a motion to recommend adopting the Data Center Ordinance, subject to the comments of the Planning Commission Solicitor regarding technical drafting issues as well as incorporating MCPC Review Letter Comments 3 through 8. The motion was seconded by David Labar, and carried unanimously.

The Solar Center Ordinance was then discussed including spelling errors and blanks for the Zoning Districts. Attorney Gaul stated Solar Farms are currently allowed in RR as a Special Exception and GC. If the Planning Commission would like to do the equivalent, it would be a Conditional Use in the RR and GC Zoning Districts.

Attorney Gaul stated a motion would be to recommend adopting the Ordinance with the condition the Ordinance is completed to reflect Solar Farms would only be allowed as Conditional Use in RR and GC Zoning Districts and would be the same for the accessory uses. This would also be subject to the Planning Commission Solicitor's technical drafting comments. Lauri Lapping made a motion to recommend adopting the Ordinance subject to (1) the Ordinance being completed to reflect Solar Farms would only be allowed as Conditional Use in RR and GC Zoning Districts and would be the same for the accessory uses, and (2) the Planning Commission Solicitor's technical drafting comments. The motion was seconded by Roger Green Jr, and carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

None

PENDING:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Lauri Lapping, seconded by Herb Stecker, and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lizzy Stortz
Temporary Recording Secretary