

**NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**North Whitehall Township Municipal Building, 3256 Levans Road, Coplay PA 18037**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF March 24, 2026**

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**Meeting** brought to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and a moment of silence at 7:00 p.m., on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, by Chair Brian Horwith.

**Attendance:**

Supervisor Richard Semmel	Planning Commission Member Sean Ziller
Planning Commission Chair Brian Horwith	<del>Planning Commission Member John Barto</del>
Planning Commission Vice Chair Bob Korp	<del>Township Zoning Officer Aubrie Miller</del>
<del>Township Manager Randy Cope</del>	Township Engineer Dave Alban
Planning Commission Secretary Kathy Crawford	Township Planner Kevin Murphy
Planning Commission Member Jeff Johnson	Township Solicitor Rocco Beltrami
<del>Planning Commission Member Rich Fuller</del>	<del>Fire Code Admin Jim Steward</del>
Planning Commissioner Member George Borman	

**Minutes** of the February 2026 Planning Commission J. Johnson motion, seconded by G. Borman approved without revisions. S. Ziller abstained.

1. **Public Comment Procedure**

- a. Motion by Chair B. Horwith, Seconded by K. Crawford no objection motion passes.

2. **Egypt Road Solar Field**

- a. S. Albright – Engineer for the project
- b. T. Skeens – Property Owner
- c. Sam - Paradise Energy Rep
- d. Seeking the planning commissions approval on the project, and the waiver letter. Would like to provide justification and they are seeking conditional plan approval of the project. Approximately 4.5 acre solar farm, 1 megawatt AC ground mounted solar array with access from Egypt Road. This project required a special exception approval, received on Sept 17, 2025. This is a phased project, phase 1 is only shown on this site plan. Land Development for phase 1 is all that has been submitted.
- e. Sonny Albright then went through the waiver request list (8): Refer to Egypt Road Solar Field Review Letter
  - i. Waiver 1: Soil Permeability (reflects comment 10 KCE Letter)
  - ii. Waiver 2: Stormwater Detention Facilities (reflects comment 12 KCE Letter)
  - iii. Waiver 3: Street Improvements (reflects comment 53 KCE Letter)
  - iv. Waiver 4: Traffic Impact Analysis (reflects comment 78 KCE Letter)
  - v. Waiver 5: Widening (reflects comment 84 KCE Letter)
  - vi. Waiver 6: 3:1 Slopes (reflects comment 87 KCE Letter)
  - vii. Waiver 7: Pathways or Bikeways (reflects comment 88 KCE Letter)
  - viii. Waiver 8: Attachment 11 Appendix F (reflects comment 98, 99 & 100 KCE Letter)
- f. Township Planner, gave a summary of Township Fire Administrator’s and Zoning Officer’s Letters
- g. Applicant would prefer to only pave first 50’ of the driveway.
- h. Chairman stated that the Zoning Officer and Fire Code Administrator’s Letters contradict each other.
- i. B. Horwith: Is there enough room to go between those lanes?
  - i. T. Skeens and S. Albright – Yes, and that would be on grass.
- j. Township Solicitor stated that with the adoption of Fire Code the applicant would have to show to satisfaction of the fire code administrator that the path meets the needs of the fire apparatus.
- k. Applicant stated they will address that point.
- l. Township Engineer: We did talk with the applicant
  - i. Just received the waiver letter today (2:30 PM prior to a 7:00 PM Planning Commission Meeting) informally, in support of them.
  - ii. In the waiver request number 3 should include Route 145
  - iii. Waiver 4 support as it is little up to low impact
  - iv. Waiver 6 supports as the design is unique
    - 1. Spillway rain garden design, infiltration berm 1A overengineered to support phase 2

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- v. Waiver 7: Should include Route 145
    - 1. Chairman B. Horwith stated that it has been the practice to grant deferrals rather than waivers typically.
  - vi. Waiver 8: Should be separate requests as they are all separate comments
    - 1. Can eliminate comment 98 as determined by the Township Engineer
    - 2. Comment 99 they are asking for a reduction of that, supported as this is a different design and future SALDO updates will reflect different requirements as we move forward with updating our standards.
    - 3. Comment 100, 3-1 versus 5-1
  - vii. Numerous drafting items remaining
  - m. R. Semmel – proposes some kind of fencing
    - i. Applicant said they could wrap the BMPs with the fence (8' chain link) (Specifically 2A) Those other infiltration areas are not accessible from the east or the north.
  - n. What is the setback requirement for the fence in that zoning district?
  - o. S. Ziller: Acknowledged that he is near the site, any noise or pollution from the operation from the Solar Field? Size of plantings? Would like to see a sidewalk on Egypt Road but defer to discretion of the board.
    - i. Response from Applicant:
      - 1. No, humming of a few computers
      - 2. Trees planted would be between 6-8 feet
  - p. R. Semmel: Appreciate the fencing of the property, believes the southern side is easy to access. Concerned with run-off generation down on Clearview. Recommends that they take a look the recommended plantings for buffers as part of the new zoning ordinance.
    - i. S. Albright said he will take a look and potentially include
  - q. B. Korp: The trees on the border will be 6-8' arborvitae, no details on the plan, some type of cross section view on the plan would be helpful for the neighbors. Supports deferrals rather than waivers for road improvements, cartways, bike paths, etc.
  - r. K. Crawford: Good luck with the deer and the arborvitae. Is it possible to add more variety than the arborvitae?
    - i. Applicant stated that there is a lot of existing vegetation on site
  - s. G. Borman: East side of Egypt Road, north side of the driveway the neighbor's well is close to the property line, are you providing any marking.
    - i. During construction it will be marked off and there will be a channel to serve as a buffer.
  - t. J. Johnson: No comment
  - u. B. Horwith: Dave Item 84, why support the waiver?
    - i. We are recommending they give any right of way to the township (Applicant stated they have no problem giving the right of way).
  - v. B. Horwith: Stormwater calculations, vegetation details, dedicating the right of way, drafting details, modifications of the waiver letter are still needed
  - w. Robert Allen – 5016 Donna Drive: Requirement to have sidewalk up Egypt does not make sense. Definitely recommend waiver for that, 145 and Clearview Road. During the construction phase of this not a lot of traffic when the project is mature, what kind of protections do we have during the construction?
    - i. Township Engineer, they do have to address many issues during their NPDES process, E & S, construction coordinators also occasionally inspect, and residents
  - x. Terry Hitchcock 48: Where are you at for your NPDES Permit? For PPL they are doing the markings for the right-of-way, do we know what's going on with what they are adding? Berm fencing, if the area is outside the fence make sure it is maintained to the same standard as inside of the fence. Make sure you consider the pavement and that the corner is a hub for water.
    - i. Applicant: Have had a formal pre-app meeting with LCCD. As far as we know they do not know what PPL is doing, initiated application with them in September and not meeting with them until July. There is a PPL easement that goes through the property,
  - y. Candy Smith 4827 Egypt Road: How big of a buffer will there be between the construction zone and my property? Will there be any vegetation to shield property from seeing the access road? There are springs are you aware of that? My neighbor and
    - i. Applicant it would be one row of trees and the fence would be setback 20'. No, it would be a vegetated swale and paved accessway. Yes, my hope is that the design will help. My plan would be to cut it this year.
  - z. B. Korp: Motion to table, seconded by J. Johnson unanimously passed.
3. **Spring Valley Meats**
- a. K. Frock – Spring Valley Meats/Cornerstone Engineering
  - b. B. Hoppes – Owner
  - c. Township Planner gave a brief description of the history of the application.

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---

- d. K. Frock of Cornerstone, gave a brief description of the site and stated what they are here for.
  - e. B. Horwith: Did we receive a waiver letter from the applicant?
    - i. Township Planner: No
  - f. K. Frock: 5 waivers
    - i. Showing items within 200' of the property
      - 1. Some information will be provided but not a surveyed plan
    - ii. Pathway/Bikeway
      - 1. Minimal frontage
    - iii. Traffic Impact Study
      - 1. Fee in lieu of instead
    - iv. Water Main Connection
      - 1. Deferral rather than a waiver
    - v. Sloping
      - 1. 5:1 Grading instead
    - vi. Stormwater
  - g. Is there anyway to use your existing well? – R. Semmel
  - h. Township Fire Code Administrator, Township Planner, and Township Engineer provided a summary of letters provided to applicants.
    - i. Large number of drafting items
    - ii. Fire Truck Templates required
    - iii. Water Line Connection Required
    - iv. Buffer Requirements
    - v. Access Easement
    - vi. Update Zoning Table
    - vii. Pathways to the bus stop
    - viii. Okay with fee in lieu of study
  - i. B. Horwith on the existing access easement
    - i. PennDOT HOP, we do not know that it exists, we cannot require them to get the HOP since that is not their property.
  - j. J. Johnson: Are you going to kill or just bringing in carcasses? Department of AG is going to inspect or make sure you are up to their standards?
    - i. Just carcasses, and yes
  - k. G. Borman: US Dept of AG
    - i. Have most of the licensing,
  - l. B. Korp: The roadside path is important, side path for pedestrians is important.
  - m. R. Semmel: No comment
  - n. S. Ziller: No comment
  - o. No staff or consultant comments
  - p. Brian Azar 3721 McIntosh Drive: Says buildings on the letter I received but only shows one building, against any smoking of meat on the property, confusion with well and municipal water, do not know if you can access property from the easement. They must check with PennDOT to ensure that it is legitimate. I do not know who is responsible for the razing of the building, it was a catastrophe when that building was demolished. What kind of waste control will they have on site?
    - i. One building on site
    - ii. One smoking device (wood stove) usually starts in the morning and ends in the afternoon.
  - q. B. Horwith motioned to table, seconded by B. Korp
4. **Parkland School District Transportation Center – Courtesy Review**
- a. No representative from Parkland School District at the meeting.
  - b. Township Planner gave a brief description of the project and what a courtesy review is.
  - c. Township Engineer gave a brief description of what the review of the traffic impact study gave us.
    - i. Provided AM/PM Peak hours, do not entail when their bus peaks are going out
    - ii. Relying on 309 betterment want to see an interim improvement plan
  - d. Comment from Planning Commission
    - i. If they are putting more buses onto the Orefield and Route 309 intersection, then we want to see what that impact looks like.
    - ii. We want to see the impact stacking lane and under the betterment on the project.

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- e. Patricia Taberna 2681 Clearview Road: The one thing I love about North Whitehall is they do not have a lot of development. Stated that our taxes are going to go up because of the increase in kids and houses. Hopes the Mauch Chuck and Cedar Crest development does not happen. Abhors the data center. Started issuing a complaint about a neighbor.
  - f. Township Planner directed to write
5. **Zoning Amendment – Data Center Amendment**
- a. K. Crawford: page 3 of 6 ANSI change to say to latest study, page 4 of 6, request estimated noise level when non grid emergency power services, paragraph E municipal water concerns,
  - b. B. Korp: Any code referenced should be the most up to date version
  - c. B. Korp motion to adopt, seconded by K. Crawford. Unanimous, motion passes.
6. **SALDO Amendments – Construction Specifications and Details, Waiver Letter Update**
- a. Township Engineer: Township does not have any construction standards, adopting these provides protection and for future maintenance. A lot of these standards come from PennDOT and other municipalities which again is beneficial since it is a familiar standard. Consistency.
  - b. B. Korp: These are standards used in other townships?
    - i. D. Alban yes, either from other townships or PennDOT
  - c. J. Johnson: You are saying that you have to close your trench at the end of the day what about when you have to do pressure test or get PPL lines?
    - i. B. Korp: Do not think you should have 1,000' of trench open.
  - d. J. Johnson: Sewer section, laterals should go to LCA not the Township
    - i. D. Alban: They probably require it but we want it for our records
      - 1. J. Johnson: Should be both then.
  - e. J. Johnson: Sidewalks, what is the problem with macadam, concrete has issues.
    - i. D. Alban you can get a waiver, or go the recreation path
  - f. B. Korp motion to adopt them, seconded by K. Crawford, Chair B. Horwith and Member Jeff Johnson voted no.
- **Any other items that may be discussed at the discretion of the Planning Commission**
- Resident Robert Allen – 5016 Donna Drive: Concern about Detention Centers
  - Supervisor R. Semmel: Do we have any regulations regarding HOAs?
    - Not at this time.
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Meeting Adjourned: 9:56  
Kevin J. Murphy Jr.  
Township Planner/Assistant Zoning Officer  
North Whitehall Township