

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of January 21, 2026**

Present: Craig Melograno, Chairman
Rich Valiga, Vice-Chair
Maureen Nunn
Danielle Porreca
Michael Mrozinski
Craig Adams
Robert Sawyer

Patty Furber, B&Z Administrator
Ed Brown, Gilmore & Associates
Chad Dixson, Bowman

Absent:

Call to Order:

The meeting of the Lower Gwynedd Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Approval of Minutes: November 19, 2025

A motion was made by Ms. Porreca and seconded by Mr. Adams to approve the minutes of the Lower Gwynedd Township Planning Commission meeting of November 19, 2025. The motion carried unanimously.

Reorganization of Planning Commission:

- Chairman: A motion was made by Mr. Valiga and seconded by Ms. Porreca to re-elect Mr. Melograno as the Chairman. The motion passed 7-0 vote.
- Vice Chair: A motion was made by Ms. Porreca and seconded by Mr. Melograno to re-elect Mr. Valiga as Vice-Chair. The motion passed 7-0 vote.
- Secretary/Vice Secretary: A motion was made by Mr. Melograno to do one vote to re-elect Ms. Furber as Secretary and Ms. Worman as Vice Secretary. The motion passed 7-0 vote.

Conditional Use Application:

Spring House Nursery Redevelopment of parcels 1208-1224 N. Bethlehem Pike/1201-1217 Cedar Hill Rd. (Gwynedd Point Village)

Present was the applicant, Mr. Pete Penna and his attorney, Mr. David Shafkowitz from Shafkowitz Law. Mr. Shafkowitz provided a background of the property, which consists of 6 parcels comprised of approximately 8.7 acres. These parcels are being considered for the proposed extension of the Lower Pike Over (LPO) District. He stated that all the properties are currently zoned A-1 and are improved with single-family homes and a non-conforming commercial landscaping nursery. He stated that the township requested that they pursue the conditional use application process even though the ordinance hasn't been formally adopted. He stated that there will be around 49 carriage-style homes with no commercial component proposed with two access points, one on Bethlehem Pike and one on Cedar Hill Rd. The townhouses will have a 2-car garage, each unit will be provided with a minimum of 2.5 off street parking spaces. He stated that another requirement in the ordinance is overflow parking, one space per unit. He stated that there would be 49 overflow spaces but wasn't sure if all of those would be needed and could possibly be placed in reserve and remain grass until needed. He stated that the property will be served by public water and sewer. The project would require reviews by PennDOT. He stated that they are currently going through a process of getting informal reviews. He stated that they purposely tried to align the access point along N. Bethlehem Pike with Fairland Drive. He stated that one of the other components of the development they are trying to improve is the 90-degree angle of the intersection of N. Bethlehem Pike and Cedar Hill Road, which will be the subject of further discussions with PennDOT and township staff. He stated that their plan will be revised to reflect sidewalks around the perimeter of the development, and they will also add curbs on both sides of the street. There will also be a 4' foot grass planting strip between the curb and sidewalk along the frontage, and they will not be providing a 30' foot buffer. He stated they will provide a generous landscaping buffer since the development is surrounded by streets on all sides. He stated a lot of the original design concepts of this project were to be very similar to Mr. Penna's project at the Fairland development down the street. He stated the first driveway off Bethlehem Pike is reflected about 50' feet from the intersection and is a PennDOT minimum; the township has a different minimum of 20' feet, so that waiver will be discussed.

Mr. Penna showed the PC renderings from each side of Bethlehem Pike and Cedar Hill Road. He stated that the homes were modeled after his Fairlands development regarding setbacks, dimensions, entrance size, and the first driveway. He stated they pushed things back a little bit with the entrance from when the first plan was submitted back in September. He stated that he had done everything that was originally promised to the neighbors regarding the streetscape. He stated he spent a lot of time over the last year in group meetings with a lot of neighbors. He stated that it was very time-consuming, very important to them to be heard, and a lot of the things that we've agreed to are reflected in these plans. Specifically, having a berm that's significant with plantings on top. He stated that the proposed fencing will be like Fairlands with stone posts, aluminum fencing, and stone facade pillars. He stated that the traffic study was submitted last week at the same time as the traffic review letter was issued by Bowman. He stated that he received the review letters after he submitted his waiver requests. He continued with the renderings explaining the landscaping and lighting plans which will be very similar to Fairlands. He stated he was trying to figure out how much land development work needs to be done prior to zoning approval. He stated that they are proposing the same lights as the Fairlands interior and the streetscape. He stated that the lanes depicted on the renderings are not accurate since they are proposing a left turning lane coming south on Bethlehem Pike. He stated that the design of the townhomes are a mix of everything that the neighbors have asked for; a mix of stone and Hardie Board Siding, with decks and he anticipates the sale price of the homes to be around one million dollars. He stated that these renderings give the PC an idea of what the townhomes will look like, stating that this is important because Cedar Hill will see the backs of the houses over the berm. He stated that he felt this community will be like Fairlands; people looking to downsize. He stated that he felt there wouldn't be many children, more of an older community, since the HOA will not permit any type of playground, swingset equipment or grills in the backyards.

Mr. Melograno wanted to know if the LPO District is still the best path forward, as noted in the Montgomery County Planning Commission's (MCPC) review letter. Mr. Penna stated the first review letter from the MCPC during their Map/Text Amendment never mentioned anything about the proposed development not being a good fit. He stated as a matter of fact, they said it was a great idea. He stated that the original plan that was submitted to them was a 52-unit plan at the time, with no commercial. He stated he wasn't sure why that was brought up since the number of units was reduced with the appropriate zoning and density for the overlay district. He stated just because it's not a mixed-use, it's right down the street from shopping centers and grocery stores, so it accomplishes everything it really needs to without having stores sitting in the middle of the development like Fairlands. Mr. Valiga wanted to know if mixed-use needs to be incorporated into the development since commercial is across the street. Mr. Melograno stated that the PC agrees that retail is not a good use for this development. Mr. Penna stated that Fairlands started as just residential, no commercial, but stated that the Board of Supervisors (BOS) back then was adamant to add commercial. He stated that he felt that this plan has evolved from the past eight months due to discussions with staff and everyone agreed that commercial would not be a good fit for this development.

Mr. Valiga brought up the MCPC's review comment regarding adding internal sidewalks. He stated that Bowman's review letter dated January 16, 2026, comments about the internal roads required width at 26' feet but 24' feet is proposed. He questioned if there was enough room to accommodate the increased road size and sidewalks. Mr. Penna stated that the cartway at Fairlands is 24' feet, dedicated roads are 26' feet, but this is going to be a closed HOA and was hoping to leave it at 24' feet. He stated as for internal sidewalks, those were discussed at length, and they decided not to do them since this is a closed HOA development and not a dedicated township road. Mr. Penna stated that he would look back at what they did with his Fairlands development but felt adding internal sidewalks would just look bizarre. If a waiver was required for sidewalks, they would ask for one but will speak with the township engineer for input.

Ms. Nunn stated that the Fire Marshal had an issue with the proposed width of the internal roadways. Mr. Penna stated that one of the Fire Marshal's issues was regarding the circumference for emergency vehicles, which wasn't a problem. He stated that if they're 24' feet wide, there's no parking, no one can come down and park along the street line because it's a closed community with no commercial. He stated that with 49 overflow parking spots, one per unit, would leave plenty of available parking, but would take whatever input the PC has regarding moving the spaces where they feel would be more appropriate. Mr. Melograno stated that he wanted to reiterate that if they move forward with 49 units, they are going to have to supply 49 overflow parking spots. Mr. Melograno stated to make sure that the parking spaces are more proximate to where they're needed; move the spaces that are required closer to where they need to be. Mr. Valiga wanted to know if there would be an overnight restriction in terms of parking overnight. Mr. Penna stated that they haven't written the HOA bylaws yet, but they will only be used for guests; usually HOA rules are very explicit for guest parking. Mr. Melograno stated that if we were going to consider accepting 24' foot cartways instead of the required 26' feet, the overflow parking would be an important part of that decision. He stated that you won't be able to permit on street parking at all. Mr. Dixon stated that he doesn't have a problem with what's proposed if street parking is prohibited. He stated that it's more important to work with Fire Marshal, Al Comly, to make sure the fire truck circulation will work with the proposed width, different turning radii, and the internal intersections. Mr. Melograno stated as the second piece of homework you need to have a high level of confidence that the Fire Marshal is going to be satisfied with what you are proposing because if you can't make the truck turns work at the different internal intersections, then he may request a cartway width wider than 24' feet in order to do so. Mr. Penna stated it was no problem; they will submit a turning radius sheet to the Fire Marsal for his review.

Ms. Jamie Worman, Director of Building & Zoning, was in the audience and questioned trash collection. Mr. Penna stated that since it won't be a dedicated road, the HOA would get their own trash hauler. He stated that the post office will probably require cluster boxes like at Fairlands but that is ultimately up to the Postmaster to decide. Mr. Dixon stated that since the roads aren't going to be dedicated to the township, it's a little bit easier to accept a narrower width. If at some point, the project turns and they offer the internal roads to the township for dedication, they will revisit the cartway width again.

Mr. Melograno wanted to discuss the highway setback along Bethlehem Pike. Mr. Dixon stated that it would be a waiver from SALDO and from his experience, it is not a common waiver request. He stated typically, if it is requested, we don't recommend the waiver be granted and will require some discussion. Mr. Penna stated that they asked for the same highway setback waiver for Fairlands, which is 35' feet from N. Bethlehem Pike. Mr. Penna stated that this is going to be a very low impact traffic-oriented development that will not have concerns like Fairlands. Mr. Dixon stated that the other important piece is to start the scoping process with PennDOT now to get some preliminary feedback from them on the Bethlehem Pike access. He stated that he didn't think they were going to meet PennDOT's warrant for a right-turn deceleration lane there and may still require them to put that in. Mr. Penna stated that he spoke with his traffic engineer and all of that is addressed in their traffic study. He stated that they investigated both left and right turning lanes; neither of them needed, but the left makes sense, and that's something they are proposing. He stated that his traffic engineer will reach out to Mr. Dixon to review the items in Bowman's review letter. Mr. Penna stated that they will get going on their scoping application, but this really was a land development item. Mr. Melograno stated that the traffic study was done in December, but it doesn't give the exact dates. Mr. Penna stated that they will look at the dates that they did the count and add them in.

Mr. Dixon brought up a concern regarding the two units that are closest to Bethlehem Pike, where the first internal road intersection is. He stated that their primary concern is there's not going to be a lot of visibility for vehicles turning out of the internal roadway. He stated that the vehicles turning in off Bethlehem Pike there's not going to be a long sight line for them to see each other, especially if they're making those movements simultaneously. He thought that PennDOT would have a concern about that as well. He stated that PennDOT wants to see at least a 50' foot separation distance from curb to curb, between the adjacent roadway and the first internal intersection. He stated if PennDOT requires more separation distance, you might have to move that further in, which could affect that building closest to it. Mr. Penna stated that they started with the first plan at 25' feet. They have two driveways and five parking spaces that are 20' feet away from the entrance that are backing and pulling out of parking spaces. Mr. Penna stated when he submitted the plan reflecting 25' feet, they received a note back from Ms. Jamie Worman and Mr. Jim Hersh, from Gilmore & Associates, stating that the minimum is 50' feet. He stated that they revised their plan and pushed that area and the driveway back to 50' feet, so that is now 50' feet from curb to curb. Mr. Dixon stated that it's just a minor detail and if PennDOT lets you go with 50' feet you're probably not going to be able to take that berm the whole way up to the driveway. Mr. Penna stated they could push it back if needed, but it may affect the placement of the sign and the berm. Mr. Dixon stated that another issue is that first internal intersection where that road comes in; do you make that one way? Mr. Penna stated when they turn in, they're not stopping; you would only be able to come in and turn right into the development with no turning, but whatever makes sense between you and our traffic engineer, they will do.

Ms. Nunn asked about a potential connection to the trail across the street where the shopping center is. There is an opportunity for a connection for the residents from Red Stone Ln to give them access to the trails. Ms. Nunn stated another potential connection could be from the existing trail on the left side of Cedar Hill Road (after the overpass on Rte. 309) could be extended to the Cedar Hill neighborhoods all the way through the Trewellyn Estate trails.

Mr. Penna stated that he will do whatever is permitted. Mr. Melograno stated that the renderings do not reflect curbing and there are no waivers requested. Mr. Penna stated that the November 25th plan does not reflect curbing, that it was an oversight by their engineer, that they didn't want to install sidewalks without curbing. Mr. Dixon brought up another significant thing, which Mr. Penna referred to as the Cedar Hill Road Realignment at Bethlehem Pike; the plan appears to show it just adding a channelized turn lane at the intersection. He stated that we will have to see what PennDOT's input is; they may want something that's more of a relocation of the approach to come in at a 90-degree angle. He stated that we just wanted to point that out because you were showing a stormwater basin on the triangle at the corner. Mr. Penna stated that they have plenty of room to shift the basin as long as they keep all the trees that he promised the neighbors. Mr. Penna stated that they could install a concrete spacer where traffic could still come in on an angle from Bethlehem Pike and would form traffic into a 90-degree turn. He stated that they will have to wait for feedback from the scoping meeting.

Mr. Valiga wanted to know about encroaching with the surface basins, if that's permitted. Mr. Penna stated that those locations are just estimates. He stated he had test pits dug before next week's snow; they are just general locations and won't know the exact locations until they do their full stormwater report. Mr. Brown stated that the proposed stormwater basins could impact the overall unit configuration of the site. Mr. Penna stated that he spoke with his engineers about the proposed underground basins. He stated that if they lose a unit, then that's what is going to happen, but this is part of the reason they started digging the test pits earlier. Mr. Dixon wanted to point out a minor detail about the access off Bethlehem Pike, if they are still proposing to align that with Fairland Drive across the street. He stated that the entrance will need to be widened. Mr. Penna stated they are going to widen that anyway and will make sure that it's aligned with Fairland Drive.

Mr. Melograno asked about a potential tree waiver. Mr. Penna stated that he had an arborist out last week and just received the report. He stated that he would send it over. He stated the report has every single tree on the entire property. He stated the existing nursery takes up almost 6 acres and most of the trees will be sold to another nursery; they are commodity trees. Mr. Melograno stated that the PC would support not counting the trees that are in transit. He stated that they intend to do this prior to transferring the property.

Mr. Melograno wanted to know about streetlighting, if it will be internal and along the frontages of Bethlehem Pike and Cedar Hill Rd. Mr. Penna stated that they intend on installing dark green lights along Bethlehem Pike and then along the internal roads and back of the development. He stated that they don't plan on putting streetlights along Cedar Hill Rd. Mr. Brown stated that the ordinance regarding streetlighting along Cedar Hill and Bethlehem Pike defers to the BOS. Mr. Penna stated that if the BOS would like streetlighting on Cedar Hill, that could be discussed.

Mr. Brown stated there were discussions regarding realigning Cedar Hill Rd. to come in at a 90-degree angle. He stated this would involve installing a crosswalk to a future connection point across Cedar Hill Rd. Mr. Brown stated that he would like the applicant to look at a future crosswalk, curb ramp and sidewalk. Mr. Penna stated that he didn't have any issues with Mr. Brown's request to install an ADA ramp but wants to keep his promise to every neighbor on Cedar Hill about keeping trees and open space. Mr. Brown reiterated that the berm would be continuous, and the parking spots would be pushed back. Mr. Penna agreed with that statement and stated that the rest of Gilmore's comments they will comply with. Mr. Melograno wanted to know about the development density. Mr. Penna stated that they are keeping over four acres of open green space. He stated that most multifamily developments like this are seven, eight

units per acre; they are 5 units per acre. Mr. Penna stated that this will be less than 50% impervious when 65% is permitted.

Mr. Melograno stated he has a list of conditions he would like the applicant to provide such as: stripes on the southbound turn lane, restrict access in/out on Cedar Hill Rd., no more than 49 units, would like the back of the properties along Cedar Hill Rd. to be depicted on the renderings. Mr. Penna stated that their concern, from an HOA perspective, is how do we stop people from cutting through the development. He stated that's something they are working very diligently on that could include things like having a one-way exit, one way out, and no way in. He stated that they are thinking about installing entrance gates that require a key fob to enter the development. He stated that this has been discussed at several meetings, and they need to figure that out.

Mr. Melograno asked Mr. Dixon if the proposed decrease of the ultimate right-of-way along N. Bethlehem Pike would be reviewed by PennDOT. Mr. Dixon stated that PennDOT is only concerned with legal rights-of-way and would defer that to the township. Mr. Melograno stated that he will request that this issue be discussed at the township's next internal Building & Zoning staff meeting due to the applicant's plan depicting a 70' ultimate-right-of-way. Mr. Melograno stated that Mr. Penna's homework will include the following: overflow parking needs to be more proximate, the Fire Marshal needs to be satisfied with the internal circulation, curbing needs to be continuous, the scoping meeting needs to be scheduled with PennDOT, exact dates needed for the traffic study, sight distances at the intersections with a potential one-way in/out need to be reviewed, adding a potential crosswalk, curbing is not a waiver, the street should align with and be consistent with Fairland Drive and make any adjustments and changes based on future meetings with the consultants and PennDOT.

Mr. Melograno stated that he would feel more comfortable if Mr. Penna used the next month to prepare and come back in February. He stated that the scoping meeting from PennDOT is very important, and the feedback from that meeting can be considered at the next meeting. Mr. Dixon stated that the scoping meeting takes a bit of time to get scheduled with PennDOT and wasn't sure if they would be prepared to come back so soon. Mr. Melograno stated that he would discuss this with staff to see if the scoping meeting should hold up the continuation of the application.



Lower Gwynedd Township:

1. Revised Zoning Ordinance Amendment 554

Ms. Jamie Worman, Director of Building & Zoning, was present to update the PC regarding the summary of changes to the draft ordinance including the PC's recommendation of adding the definition of "junk" and some other clean up items. Ms. Worman stated these are some of the items that come up all the time and give us issues as an example; residents submitting generator permits located on corner lots, have two front yards, would require a variance. She stated that section has been replaced with a provision allowing generators on the side of a house located on a corner lot as long as the equipment was adequately buffered. She highlighted a few additional changes within the ordinance.

A motion was made by Mr. Melograno to recommend approval of the Revised Zoning Ordinance Amendment 554 to the Board of Supervisors and seconded by Mr. Mrozinski.

The motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

2. Update on Comprehensive Plan - Town Hall Meeting

Ms. Jamie Worman, Director of Building & Zoning, was present to update the PC regarding the comprehensive plan. She stated that the township has been working on updating the comprehensive plan with the steering committee wrapping it up during the summer. She stated that the next step is the formal adoption of the plan which will be listed at the BOS's agenda for, Tuesday, January 27th, to officially start the 45-day public review period. She stated that the plan will get distributed to neighboring municipalities, the school district, and be available for public review. She stated that the BOS will hold a town hall to discuss a broad overview of the plan, focus on the future land use map and the Bethlehem Pike revitalization. She stated these were the two main items that have come out of the public sessions. She stated that it will be a small group breakout, to get more input before the plan is adopted. She stated that the BOS is encouraging the public to come out, and they would love to have the members of the PC attend and ask questions as well, because their input is important. She stated one of the major things we're going to need to do because of the plan, is change our zoning ordinance; changes in zoning are needed, and the zoning ordinance hasn't changed in a long time. She stated that they also want to hear what the public would like along Bethlehem Pike, like coffee shops, breweries, restaurants, and other uses that would make that corridor area a viable spot. She stated the plan will be available to the public on the Township website. A notification about the plan and the upcoming town hall will be communicated through the Township's social media, website and electronic newsletter. The town hall will take place at Gwynedd Mercy University on Thursday, February 19th at 7:00 p.m. She stated Claire will not be able to attend the town hall meeting, but township staff and the BOS will be present along with members of the steering committee. She stated that Project Manager, John Farrell, would be giving the presentation. She stated that Claire will be back before the PC as part of the adoption process, probably in March to present the final plan.



ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Furber
Patty Furber, Secretary