

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes of February 18, 2026**

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

Jamie Worman, Asst. Township Manager  
Patty Furber, B&Z Administrator  
Ed Brown, Gilmore & Associates

**Absent:**

**Call to Order:**

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

**Approval of Minutes: January 21, 2026**

A motion was made by Mr. Sawyer and seconded by Mr. Adams to approve the minutes (with additional comments by Ms. Nunn) of the Lower Gwynedd Township Planning Commission from the meeting of January 21, 2026. The motion carried unanimously.

**Land Development:**

#26-02LD

**Foulkeways Fitness Center Expansion  
1120 Meetinghouse Rd.**

Present for the land development application was Ms. Christen Pionzio from HRMM&L, Mr. Tim Woodrow from Woodrow & Associates and Mr. Frank Mandy from Foulkeways. Ms. Pionzio stated that the last time they were here was for a conditional use application to install a storm pipe into a channel across the property for the proposed fitness center. She stated that this work has been completed and the proposed fitness center will go over where that pipework was completed. Ms. Pionzio stated that the proposed addition will be to the side of the existing fitness center building.

Ms. Pionzio stated that Fire Marshal, Al Comly, had comments about the fire department's access. She stated that Mr. Woodrow met Mr. Comly onsite, and they came up with a concept and made some changes to the plan. She stated that they will make room for a fire truck next to the building and install a new fire hydrant. She stated that Mr. Comly thinks we're on the right track, and they are willing to make sure this happens to ensure fire access to this building. She stated that as they roll over units, the fire department

will receive an alarm for the older units in the older sections of the buildings, but any renovations or construction will be hooked up to this new notification system, including this addition.

Mr. Valiga wanted to know if the entire facility will be upgraded. Mr. Woodrow stated that the entire facility will eventually be upgraded, but the new alarm system is very expensive and will slowly integrate it into all new spaces. Mr. Comly was in the audience. He stated that right now, anything that gets dispatched to Foulkeways comes in as the main address: 1120 Meeting House Road. He stated for now, it's fine; it gets EMS to the driveway, but as everyone knows, it's a large campus. He stated that the standard today is what they call an addressable system, which can give feedback to dispatch about the exact device that's going off. He stated that they have been discussing with Foulkeways for about 20 years the fact that this system needs to be upgraded, so it can send out a signal in a more addressable manner. He stated that his point is to make sure that at least this building can do that, then we'll work our way around to doing the other sections. He stated that he had concerns because that is a busy area back there with deliveries. They want to make sure that the fire department connection is in a location that doesn't completely block the road for EMS vehicles. He stated that they worked on having a pull-off in that location, but in this case, he thinks it's a necessity, because that is a narrow spot where you go past the entrance into Abington House on the lowest level.

Mr. Melograno wanted to know if there would be signage for this pull-off area since it looks like a drop-off area. Mr. Woodrow stated they could paint stripes for the fire lanes and add signage. Mr. Comly stated that they tried to locate it so it's away from where the entrance of the building will be located. He stated that it's away from where people should be dropping off and picking up. He stated that they are focused on putting this new fire hydrant within 75' feet of the fire department connection. He stated that he thought widening this area would allow EMS vehicles in and out safely. Mr. Woodrow stated that he did not want to make a revised plan submission right before this meeting, that they would get through these discussions and submit revised plans to reflect the road widening and fire department connection concerns. Mr. Mrozinski wanted to know about the extension of the addition if that makes it harder to get apparatus to the existing fitness center since it's pushing it out a little bit and if that's close enough to where it needs to be. Mr. Comly stated that they looked at it, and it's not that wide and not making much of a difference there. He stated with the proposed widening and the pull-off will help with access.

Mr. Melograno wanted to know about the trail. Mr. Woodrow stated that they will have to relocate the trail around the outside of the fitness center. Mr. Melograno wanted to know with the cutout if they are going to redirect the trails if the concrete block wall moves? Mr. Woodrow stated the trail comes around in front of the building, where there's access to the main building and up to the community center. He stated that the trail will go along the front of the walkway, connect again to the perimeter of the parking lot and to a new connection of trail near the picnic grove area. Mr. Melograno wanted to make sure that it wouldn't go through the fire access lane. Mr. Woodrow stated that was correct.

Mr. Melograno wanted to know what percentage of the buildings have the addressable fire alarm system? Ms. Pionzio stated as people move out, they will turn the buildings over to the new system. Mr. Comly stated that the original system is too old and doesn't have the necessary capacity. He stated they're going to have to replace those units, but understands it is going to be very expensive to upgrade. Mr. Valiga wanted to know if the system meets the code now? Mr. Comly stated that they had a fair number of fire alarm issues on campus. He stated that the township is very prone to lightning strikes and even lightning to ground where you have wire running which can cause false alarms and has caused a lot of issues. He stated that he thought it would take a good bit of research to answer how much of the systems they have in place now would be salvageable. He stated that in the case of large buildings, firefighters don't have time to spend half an hour walking around the building to figure out where the problem is. He stated that usually somebody must meet them at the entrance to guide them. He stated that Foulkeways must start to anticipate this when they do their project budgeting. Ms. Pionzio stated that the problem is people are

living in these units and you can't displace them and retrofit an old building. She stated that the main issue is waiting until they can turn over these buildings. That's when they're trying to address these system upgrades. Mr. Melograno stated that since this issue continues to come up repeatedly, they might want to turn it into a positive and include a status of where they are with their continuing efforts of upgrading their system. He stated for example, they're currently at 65% of completion. Mr. Woodrow and Ms. Pionzio thought that was a good idea, and they would investigate it.

Ms. Pionzio stated that they would comply with all the review letters except for the waivers. She stated that replanting is necessary on the pipework that's already been done, as noted in Gilmore's letter. Mr. Woodrow stated there was some hesitation a couple of years ago before the Rte. 202 improvements were completed. There was hesitation as to what those PennDOT improvements might eventually look like. He stated now that the intersection is completed; we know what the right-of-way need was for Sumneytown Pike and along Rte. 202, so we're more comfortable knowing that no additional right-of-way is needed. Ms. Pionzio stated that since Foulkeways has acquired the houses along the perimeter of Sumneytown Pike, they've closed off those driveways and made them part of the internal drive. She stated they planted along those edges of Sumneytown Pike, but there are some gaps that could be filled in. Mr. Woodrow stated that they need to go out and verify the gaps. He stated that he would go out with the landscaping team and do a campus walk to see where maybe some street trees would be appropriate and defer that to the Gilmore team. Mr. Woodrow stated that Foulkeways has undertaken a reforestation plan for the entire campus. They removed a lot of invasive species and literally hundreds of trees over the last couple of years. He stated that he thought a site walk with Gilmore would certainly take care of that.

Ms. Pionzio stated that as for the replacement trees, they can put them in any location but will verify where they're going. Mr. Brown stated they need the planting locations verified. Ms. Pionzio agreed. Mr. Melograno wanted to know how many replacement trees are needed? Mr. Woodrow stated that he needed to update the list since the pipework removed a couple more trees after their arborist left. He stated that he will update that number on the plan that occurred between the time we submitted and tonight and have those numbers together. Mr. Melograno wanted to know why the tree waiver is necessary since this is one big campus. Mr. Woodrow stated that he didn't think they needed a full waiver, maybe a partial, since they are hopeful that with the tree replacement they have been doing over the last couple of years could be credited towards the replacement number. Mr. Brown stated that it is one property, so the waiver is not needed. Mr. Melograno wanted to know how to address this. Mr. Woodrow stated that that have a tree list in a spreadsheet that maybe we could utilize. He stated that during their walk with the Gilmore team, they can define areas where they can plant more trees. He stated that they could withdraw the waiver request. Ms. Pionzio stated to Mr. Woodrow to make sure the list verifies those plantings go with this application so they can keep track of what we're planting. Mr. Adams was hoping to be more flexible since there's a lot of tree work going on there all the time. Ms. Nunn informed the PC that Foulkeways was the winner of Lower Gwynedd's 2nd Going Green Award, and this was a part of the entire decision-making process.

Ms. Pionzio stated the next waiver is for the sidewalks along the existing perimeter, and trails to be 8' feet. She stated that we don't have trails along Sumneytown Pike because there's no connection, but there are places you can enter the campus and get onto the trail system. She stated that instead of putting things along the edges, we have it on the inside, where it's beautiful, more enjoyable, and safer. Mr. Woodrow stated that there is now a pedestrian crossing of Rte. 202 from the Foulkeways corner over to the Gwynedd Friends Meeting site. He stated Gwynedd Friends has a grant through the township to install a bus shelter, at the bus stop opposite the William Penn Inn. He stated that bus shelter should be going in sooner rather than later and will improve the walking trail across the Gwynedd Friends Meeting property.

Mr. Valiga stated that they didn't mention in their waiver that they were going to replace the storm pipe with a smaller size. Mr. Woodrow stated that the proposed HPDE 12" inch is the design as opposed to 18" inch, which is the ordinance requirement for township dedicated roadways. Mr. Brown stated that he agreed with Mr. Woodrow that the way the ordinance is written, the pipe size applies to dedicated roadways only.

Mr. Valiga wanted to know about the rain garden calculation report, if that was updated over a period of time or just once? Mr. Brown stated it was probably not added to their report. Mr. Woodrow stated that it was updated just once. Mr. Valiga felt where the rain garden is located wouldn't have much of an impact on stormwater. Mr. Woodrow stated that they would have to enter into a Township Stormwater Maintenance and Ownership Agreement to ensure that the rain garden is properly maintained.

Mr. Melograno asked about the Montgomery County Planning Commission review letter dated January 2, 2026, regarding their recommendation of plantings around the rain garden. Mr. Valiga wanted to know if this was a detention basin? Mr. Brown stated that there is a difference between the rain garden and basin that you get more shrub material in a rain garden than you would in a larger detention basin. Ms. Pionzio stated that she thought it was a matter of interpretation, that the county is looking at as if it's a detention basin because it has a berm, but it's really a rain garden and will be planted to function as such. Mr. Woodrow stated that the rain garden will handle the area around the fitness center. He stated that if they were proposing a brand-new building then they would install detention basins, but for this small project a rain garden would suffice. Mr. Valiga stated that he was more concerned about the flow rate, if it was adequate. Mr. Brown stated that the peak rate was reduced. Mr. Valiga stated that he just wanted to make sure this was going to work.

A motion was made by Ms. Porreca and seconded by Mr. Sawyer to recommend Preliminary/Final Land Development approval for the Foulkeways Fitness Center Expansion to the Board of Supervisors based on the following recommendations:

1. The proposed trail will not run through the fire access lane
2. Applicant to comply with all the Fire Marshal's comments and concerns
3. Applicant will review with Gilmore an opportunity to add trees to fill in the gaps along the frontages
4. Update the tree removal count from the pipe relocation project; determine final tree location during walk with Gilmore & Associates
5. Remove waiver request 1230.41(i) for replacement trees
6. Revise waiver request 1241.401(n) for the storm pipe diameter to reflect HDPE 12" as an alternate product
7. Applicant to comply with Bowman and Gilmore's review letters
8. Applicant will work with Gilmore to verify planting species within the rain garden

**The motion passed with a 7-0 vote.**



**Lower Gwynedd Township:**  
**Wireless Telecommunication Towers Zoning Ordinance Amendment**

Ms. Worman gave an update to the PC regarding amending the existing cell tower ordinance. She stated that cell towers were only permitted within certain locations within the township. She stated that there has been an outcry from the community about lack of cell service and the BOS has been working for some time

to try to address this issue. She stated one of the cell sites would be located at Penllyn Woods. She stated that in preparation of the proposed cell towers there was a need to update our ordinance. She stated they have added a new use within the Lower Pike Overlay District which permits cell towers in certain locations within 2,000 feet of the vicinity of the Spring House intersection. She stated that other revisions of the ordinance will address the height of cell towers and aesthetics requirements.

Mr. Mike Malloy from Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel LLP and part-owner of Rise Up Towers was present. He stated that discussions on trying to install cell towers within the township have been ongoing for over the past three and a half years. He stated that BOS meetings would be packed full of residents protesting, not against it, but in favor of the cell towers. He stated that one of the proposed site locations was here at the Township Building, which would have been the best location, but a surrounding resident protested, so they decided against that location.

He stated that the Township would receive 40% of the gross revenue of the tower as ground rent with a 29-year lease term. He stated that the towers will be a rust color, and they will sit back as far as possible so they will be aesthetically pleasing. He stated as part of his deal; he would replace the township's cinder block storage bins where the tower will be located. Mr. Sawyer wanted to know how many towers are being proposed. Mr. Malloy stated there will be two proposed locations... one at Andy's Diner and one at Penllyn Woods. Mr. Sawyer wanted to know if the towers would be 150' feet. Mr. Malloy stated that Verizon wants to be 137' feet at Andy's Diner, T-Mobile is proposing 150' feet and AT&T still needed to figure it out.

Mr. Valiga wanted to know about the range of distances. Mr. Malloy stated the range would be around a mile to a mile and a half, but it depends on the geography of the area. He stated that they did try and work out a deal with Foulkeways but ultimately, the location was too prominent and felt it was not going to work.

Mr. Melograno stated he felt the most important paragraph of the whole ordinance is there are a lot of places these towers could go, but it's up to the BOSs sole discretion that the proposed facility is necessary to close a gap in coverage. He stated that it's almost like applying for a conditional use application for land development where they can place caveats on it and if you can't prove it's necessary then you don't get it. Mr. Malloy stated that once the two towers are built, there will be no gaps in coverage.

Mr. Melograno wanted to know if Mr. Malloy put up any towers locally. Mr. Malloy stated that they have 5 towers in total. He stated that they have currently have 3 under construction in Delaware County and 1 in New Jersey. Mr. Melograno wanted to know where the electricity would come from. Mr. Malloy stated that the power would be from PECO, not high, around 140 watts. He stated that he was going to try to bring the internet into the Penllyn Woods Building but wasn't sure how difficult it would be.

Ms. Nunn wanted to know if safety measures would be in place to prevent kids from climbing up the towers. Mr. Malloy stated that climbing up the towers would be impossible since they are around 150' feet in height and that area would be fenced in. Mr. Malloy stated that he would have a system in place where his engineering company will go out and look at these sites every 3 months. They will report back to his general contractor and do whatever is needed to make sure those areas are secure.

Mr. Malloy stated that he hopes this will be the last stop, and that he will only have to submit a building permit application. Ms. Worman stated that a waiver of land development and a full building permit submission would be required. Mr. Malloy stated that he did not want to go through land development and was there any way to revise the ordinance. Ms. Worman stated to revise the zoning ordinance; it would have to go through the whole process again from the beginning. Mr. Melograno stated they could

make a motion to request a provision be added to the zoning ordinance that cell towers would not require land development. Mr. Malloy was very appreciative.

A motion was made by Mr. Melograno and seconded by Mr. Adams that the PC supports approving the zoning ordinance to include a provision that cell towers will not require land development.

**The motion passed with a 7-0 vote.**



**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*Patricia Furber*

Patty Furber, Secretary