

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

Present: Craig Melograno, Chairman
Maureen Nunn
Michael Mrozinski
Craig Adams
Robert Sawyer

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

Absent: Rich Valiga, Vice-Chair, Danielle Porreca

Call to Order:

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

Approval of Minutes: February 18, 2026

A motion was made by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Mrozinski to approve the minutes of the Lower Gwynedd Township Planning Commission from the meeting of February 18, 2026. The motion carried unanimously.

Land Development:

#26-05WLD

Goddard Daycare Center
820 N. Bethlehem Pike

Present for the waiver of land development application was Ms. Kate Harper, from Timothy Knox LLP. And Mr. John Smith from Philips Associates. Ms. Harper explained that the property located at 820 N. Bethlehem Pike was previously approved for both a daycare center and a medical office building. The daycare was constructed first and is operating successfully. She stated that when the owner attempted to rent out the medical office building, Goddard Daycare requested to expand into that space, proposing two additional classrooms, office space, and a kitchenette.

Ms. Harper noted that the daycare center obtained zoning hearing board approval for their expansion. The only modifications to the previously approved land development plan are the addition of two handicap ramps and a small, fenced enclosure to provide a safe walkway for teachers and students between the existing daycare and the new classrooms.

Ms. Harper stated they are requesting a waiver from land development since this is just a minor modification to an already approved plan. She added that they may lose a couple of trees to accommodate the changes, and they will either request a tree waiver and offer a fee in lieu or replace the trees on the site. Mr. Melograno initially expressed concern about including waivers with what should be a clean, simple approval, stating that a truly minor modification shouldn't include waiver requests. Mr. Melograno recommended that no waivers be sought, suggesting they simply replant the trees on the property to keep the approval clean and uncontestable. He stated that if they remove a tree, then they need to find a place to replant them. Ms. Harper agreed, stating that there was a small area behind the building where they could plant trees.

The applicant also confirmed they would pay additional traffic impact fees for the slight increase in trips generated by the expansion, noting they had previously paid such fees and would pay the difference.

A motion was made by Mr. Sawyer and seconded by Mr. Adams to recommend a waiver of Preliminary/Final Land Development approval to the Board of Supervisors based on the following condition:

- 1) Approved with the condition that no waivers (other than the waiver of land development) are associated with this application, and any trees that are removed must be replaced on the property.

The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.



Gypsy Hill Developers - Lot 2
1622 Gypsy Hill Rd.

#26-04LD

Present for the land development application was Ms. Susan Rice, P.E. with STA Engineering and the applicant, Mr. Chris Condello. Ms. Rice explained this application stems from a previous subdivision that created one building lot, with conditions requiring presentation of building plans and stormwater management details when developing that lot. She explained that upon engineering, they discovered the previously shown approximate building footprint and disturbance area were too small for a viable house, requiring expansion of the limit of disturbance and affecting more trees than originally anticipated. She stated that an arborist report identified 81 replacement trees would be required. The applicant requested waivers for tree replacement (proposing a combination of on-site plantings and fees).

Ms. Rice explained that the sidewalk and street light waivers were appropriate because this is a single lot accessing an existing cul-de-sac with only 50 feet of frontage, and both waivers had been granted for the original subdivision.

Mr. Melograno expressed frustration with the confusing presentation, stating "of all the things that you can't make confusing are trees" and noting there wasn't "a single number that was consistent." He indicated he would normally require the applicant to return with a clearer engineered plan, but township engineer Mr. Brown convinced him to consider moving forward with proper conditions.

The PC supported the sidewalk and street light waivers but established specific conditions for the tree replacement. They eliminated any consideration of evergreen trees as replacements, required compliance with the native tree ordinance, and mandated a site visit between the applicant and the township's certified

arborist to verify the final tree count and determine how many trees could realistically be planted on-site versus paid as fees.

A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski and seconded by Mr. Adams to recommend Preliminary/Final Land Development approval to the Board of Supervisors based on the following recommendations:

- 1) No evergreens are to be part of the tree replacement count.
- 2) The applicant must comply with the native tree ordinance.
- 3) A site visit is required by the township engineer and arborist to determine the final tree count.
- 4) The board supports the waivers for sidewalks and streetlights.

The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.



Conditional Use Application:

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

Mr. Pete Penna and his attorney, Mr. David Shafkowitz from Shafkowitz Law, returned for the continuance of the application. Mr. Penna presented a revised plan for 48 townhouses following previous PC feedback. The project requires a zoning map amendment to extend the Lower Pike Overlay District to include these properties along with conditional use approval.

Mr. Melograno wanted to review the list of homework that was given to Mr. Penna from his last appearance on January 21st. Mr. Penna informed the PC regarding key changes that have been made including pushing the entire development back 15' feet from Bethlehem Pike, eliminating parking along the internal road adjacent to Bethlehem Pike, and redistributing that parking throughout the development. This adjustment cost one unit, reducing the total units from 49 to 48 townhouses, but created better setbacks and spacing. Mr. Melograno wanted to confirm that there will be a maximum of 48 units in total, less is fine, but no more than 48. Mr. Penna agreed.

Mr. Penna reported receiving PennDOT's scoping application response, which addressed three main areas: the Bethlehem Pike entrance, the Cedar Hill intersection realignment, and a potential crosswalk. PennDOT did not propose restrictions on ingress and egress, and both the applicant and Township Traffic Engineer Mr. Dixon agreed that while they have different opinions on the exact design of the intersection realignment, both approaches are feasible and will be worked out during land development. Mr. Dixon confirmed the intersection realignment is not infeasible, just requiring coordination between different parties' preferences and ultimate PennDOT approval. Regarding the crosswalk, the applicant will need to demonstrate a warrant for a mid-block crossing on Bethlehem Pike, with PennDOT having final approval authority.

The PC discussed the potential for traffic cut-through, with the applicant indicating they're considering various measures including potentially making the Cedar Hill entrance one-way outbound only, or installing gate treatments, since all roads will be private.

On parking distribution, Mr. Melograno noted that while improvements have been made, some areas in the middle of the development could still be better distributed, which could be refined during land development. The applicant committed to compliance with all Lower Pike Overlay requirements for

landscaping, lighting, and streetscape improvements without requesting waivers. Mr. Penna stated that the sidewalk along Bethlehem Pike is reflected at 4' foot wide but would be revised to 5' foot as required by code.

Mr. Melograno wanted to reconfirm that there would be no tree waivers requested. Mr. Penna stated that was correct; the only trees remaining were the ones to be sold by the nursery, the majority of those being commodity trees. He stated that only trees that are staying are located on the triangle piece and if that ends up getting changed, they will have the arborist go back out to update that area. Mr. Dixon stated that once the intersection gets moved a little bit further north, that will create an area where they could do some plantings if needed.

A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski and seconded by Mr. Sawyer to recommend approval of the zoning map amendment to extend the Lower Pike Overlay District to include the subject properties.

The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

A motion was made by Ms. Nunn and seconded by Mr. Adams to recommend conditional use approval based on the following conditions:

1. The applicant will comply with the Lower Pike Overlay requirements for landscaping, lighting, and streetscapes and will not request any waivers.
2. The sidewalk out front will be 5' foot as required by code.
3. The applicant will provide, if determined by PennDOT, a pedestrian crossing at Bethlehem Pike that may or may not include flashing beacons.
4. The applicant will improve the Cedar Hill Rd and Bethlehem Pike intersections per the Township Traffic Engineer and PennDOT.
5. The exterior of the townhouses must stay consistent with renderings presented during the January 21, 2026, PC meeting.
6. No tree waiver is to be requested.
7. There shall be a maximum of 48 townhouse units only with distributed parking.
8. The applicant will provide a left turn lane from the property on to Bethlehem Pike.

The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.



**Lower Gwynedd Township:
Comprehensive Plan Review**

Ms. Claire Warner from Montgomery County Planning Commission gave an update to the PC regarding the comprehensive plan. Ms. Warner provided an update on the comprehensive plan process, noting they had received positive public feedback on the broad goals and vision statement. She highlighted key themes that emerged from public input including desires for more community gathering spaces, balanced approaches to housing that preserve neighborhood character while meeting housing needs, improved walkability and transportation safety, and better pedestrian and bicycle connections.

Ms. Warner explained that the future land use map is not a zoning map but rather a guide for future decisions. She noted that some renderings and concept plans had been removed from the document following public confusion about whether these represented actual proposals versus illustrative examples. Ms. Worman stated that the specific removal involved graphics that had shown potential redevelopment

of the Giant shopping center across the street, which some of the public interpreted as concrete plans rather than conceptual illustrations.

Ms. Warner stated that the map now includes three tiers of mixed-use categories rather than one, responding to the PC input. The highest intensity mixed-use designation covers existing large commercial properties like the Giant and Whole Foods shopping centers. Medium-scale mixed-use areas are illustrated with examples like the Fairlands development, showing 3-4 story buildings. The lowest tier represents smaller-scale mixed-use opportunities.

Ms. Worman noted that residents generally supported offering different housing types including apartment-style structures but preferred more modest scales similar to developments like the one proposed at Ambler Yards which include a 43-unit apartment building rather than large-scale high-density projects. The preference was for mixed-use development that isn't overly intense but provides variety in housing options. Ms. Warner presented demographic data showing Lower Gwynedd's growth pattern, predominant single-family housing stock, and aging population, with 60 percent above age 48. Transportation data revealed that 60 percent of residents drive to work, though this has changed significantly since COVID with more people working from home and fewer using public transit. The plan includes goals for maintaining neighborhood character while meeting housing needs, improving road safety and slowing traffic in residential areas, encouraging walkability and public transit use, improving water quality and reducing flooding impacts, and preserving historic resources significant to community identity.

Ms. Warner showed maps illustrating walkability connections between key nodes like schools, grocery stores, and train stations, along with areas identified for potential safety improvements. Environmental considerations included tree canopy coverage, impervious surface mapping, and surface temperature impacts.

Mr. Melograno noted the importance of the comprehensive plan not being used as a weapon against future development proposals, while acknowledging its value as a guide for municipal decision-making. The discussion touched on how the plan's recommendations would influence future zoning decisions and development reviews.

A motion was made by Mr. Sawyer and seconded by Mr. Adams to recommend approval of the comprehensive plan to the Board of Supervisors.

The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.



ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Furber
Patty Furber, Secretary