

**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 26, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Michelle Greenawalt.

ROLL CALL

Present: Michelle Greenawalt, Jennifer Taylor, Bob Andorn, Bill McGrane, Lee Koch

Absent: Tony Sherr

Also Present: Township Manager Dan DeMeno, Township Engineer John Evarts, Applicants and Representatives

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of January 22nd, 2026 Meeting Minutes – Approved 4-0

SALDO AMENDMENT – MINOR PLAN / WAIVER REFORM DISCUSSION

Township Manager Dan DeMeno presented a draft ordinance amendment to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) addressing the Township’s current waiver practices and proposing a formal “minor plan” review process.

Mr. DeMeno explained that the Township has historically granted informal waivers of land development requirements, which has created inconsistency and the appearance of preferential treatment. He noted that recent waiver requests highlighted the issue, with one project being too large to justify a waiver and another being minor in scope but still subject to full land development requirements under the current ordinance.

Mr. DeMeno stated that the Board of Supervisors recently declined to grant waivers, reinforcing the need for a clearer, codified process. The proposed amendment would:

- Clarify and expand definitions, including subdivision, land development, lot line adjustment, and consolidation
- Establish a minor plan category with defined thresholds
- Remove subjective decision-making by setting objective criteria
- Allow qualifying plans to proceed through an administrative review process while still requiring full compliance with zoning and SALDO standards
- Permit direct advancement to the Board of Supervisors for preliminary/final approval
- Reduce costs and processing time for smaller projects

- Align Worcester Township with surrounding municipalities and best practices supported by the Montgomery County Planning Commission

Mr. DeMeno emphasized that the proposal does not eliminate technical review requirements and does not allow applicants to bypass ordinance compliance.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Greenawalt noted that the proposal creates a more formalized process.

Ms. Taylor identified inconsistencies in the draft ordinance regarding subdivision thresholds, noting references to both two- and three-lot subdivisions.

Mr. DeMeno confirmed the intent was to limit minor subdivisions to two lots and acknowledged the inconsistency would be corrected.

Mr. Andorn stated he supports the concept of improving the process but does not support the ordinance as currently drafted. He expressed concern that the proposed framework effectively grants automatic waivers rather than requiring applicants to request relief. He advocated for maintaining a mandatory review process with a structured, non-discretionary waiver mechanism.

Mr. Andorn also raised concerns including:

- The proposed 10,000 square foot threshold being too large
- Potential loss of Planning Commission oversight
- Reduced public visibility and opportunity for input
- Lack of clarity on cost reductions
- The need for tiered fee structures based on project size
- Maintaining full technical submission standards

Mr. Andorn suggested a tiered system (small, medium, large projects) and emphasized that “small should be small.”

Mr. DeMeno responded that thresholds are adjustable and reiterated that the goal is to remove subjectivity and protect both applicants and the Township.

Mr. Andorn requested comparable ordinances from similarly sized municipalities for further review.

Mr. DeMeno agreed to provide examples, including Skippack and other comparable townships.

Mr. DeMeno stated he would revise the draft ordinance based on feedback and resubmit for further review.

No formal action was taken.

LAND DEVELOPMENT 2022-01 – CITY VIEW

SEWER PLANNING MODULE (COMPONENT 4A)

Mr. Evarts presented Component 4A of the sewer planning module for the City View project, noting that:

- Component 4A is required for submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Components 4B and 4C have already been reviewed by the Montgomery County Health Department and Montgomery County Planning Commission
- The Planning Commission's role is limited to reviewing Component 4A
- This is an administrative action and does not constitute land development approval

Mr. Andorn raised procedural and technical questions, including prior signatures, wetlands, and completeness of documentation. Mr. Evarts clarified that:

- Updated signature pages were prepared
- No wetlands are present on the site
- Additional components of the planning module will be reviewed upon full submission

Motion was made by Michelle Greenawalt to recommend approval of Component 4A of the sewer planning module for the City View project.

Seconded by Bob Andorn.

Motion carried unanimously.

LAND DEVELOPMENT 2025-02 – METHACTON HIGH SCHOOL

SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

Attorney Eric Frye presented the Methacton High School project on behalf of the School District. He explained that the project has evolved from a full rebuild to a renovation and expansion, to be completed in five phases over approximately 2.5 to 3 years.

Key project elements include:

- Reduction and consolidation of site access points
- Expanded parking without increasing student or staff population
- Building additions primarily on the west side of the campus
- Improvements to traffic circulation and parent drop-off areas
- Separation of bus traffic from parent and student traffic

Mr. Frye outlined zoning relief requests, including:

- Front yard setback relief due to existing encroachments
- Impervious coverage increase of approximately 8%
- Parking setback relief
- Relief from outdated lighting standards

Project representatives, including engineers, architects, and traffic consultants, were present.

Discussion followed.

Mr. Andorn raised concerns regarding:

- Lack of complete submission materials to all Planning Commission members
- Operational challenges with traffic circulation and bus access
- Parking capacity and student population assumptions
- Building program details, including classroom versus addition space
- Removal of the administration building and associated parking impacts

Ms. Greenawalt raised questions regarding pedestrian safety, bus circulation, and building access points.

Mr. McGrane questioned whether a parking garage was considered and raised concerns about loss of green space and long-term site constraints.

Ms. Taylor raised concerns regarding existing parking lot design and circulation inefficiencies.

Mr. Koch inquired about athletic facilities and pool relocation.

Discussion also included pedestrian safety and the need for sidewalks or internal pathways. Mr. Andorn stated he supports sidewalks in all cases, emphasizing safety concerns for students and residents.

No formal action was taken.

LAND DEVELOPMENT 2025-01 – TROOPER RIDGE TOWNHOMES

Attorney Rob Gunlock presented the Trooper Ridge Townhome project, noting that the application has progressed through sketch and preliminary plan phases and is now in final review.

Mr. Gunlock summarized prior Planning Commission concerns and stated that the applicant has addressed:

- Architectural design enhancements
- Inclusion of amenity space
- Provision of overflow parking, including an agreement with a nearby church for temporary use

Mr. Gunlock noted the project involves multiple reviewing agencies, including the Township, PennDOT, and Montgomery County, and that coordination is ongoing.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Greenawalt raised concerns regarding building height and basement classification, referencing ordinance definitions.

Mr. Evarts stated that due to grading conditions, some units may be considered three-story structures rather than two-story, requiring zoning relief. He advised that Planning Commission recommendation may be premature prior to Zoning Hearing Board action.

Mr. Gunlock indicated the applicant intends to seek zoning relief and suggested that a recommendation could be made contingent upon approval.

Mr. Andorn agreed that discussion should proceed but expressed reluctance to make a recommendation prior to zoning relief.

Additional discussion included:

- Clarification of applicant entity names and documentation consistency
- Fire suppression system design and utility coordination

- Sanitary sewer design and capacity, including grinder pump systems and downstream infrastructure
- Buffer yard adequacy and responsibility for final determination
- Technical review comments from Township consultants

No formal action was taken.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. DeMeno provided updates including:

- Upcoming City View resubmission to be uploaded to SharePoint
- Anticipated need for a special meeting due to public interest and expected attendance
- Coordination with Methacton School District for facility availability
- Scheduling considerations for upcoming applications, including 1616 Whitehall Road

Mr. DeMeno also noted ongoing work on the sign ordinance revision and distribution of materials via SharePoint.