

Lower Milford Township Planning Commission
7607 Chestnut Hill Church Rd Coopersburg, PA 18036
Lehigh County, Pennsylvania

Monday, September 21, 2026 – 6:30 PM

Workshop Meeting Minutes

Members Present: John Harbove, Chair; John Bannon; Ellen Koplin; Kara Stever; Allison Schaffer; Andrea Silvestri, Planning Commission Secretary; and Donna Wright from Farmland Preservation.

The meeting was called to order by John Harbove, Chair, at 6:34.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

JBannon made a motion to accept the minutes of August 3rd with edits for headings, which was seconded by KStever and the motion was unanimously passed.

Zoning Changes in Lower Macungie

JHarbove reported on concerns regarding Lower Macungie changing their zoning table and removing certain zoning districts. Nathan Jones clarified that these are aggregated or combined zoning districts where multiple uses per lot were being removed, while underlying industrial districts remain.

The commission discussed the risk of these changes pushing industrial developments toward this township, and the strength of our regional plan as a defense mechanism.

Regional Plan and Data Centers

The discussion shifted to whether an overlay district is a better strategy for managing data centers and commercial solar compared to relying on the regional plan.

DWright explained that the regional plan allows municipalities to share zoning protections, provided they follow the implementation agreement. Members were made aware that there was a strong implementation agreement to help ensure individual municipal changes would not erode regional protections. There was a discussion regarding the effectiveness of creating an industrial overlay district given the current lack of industrial-zoned land in the township, and the consensus was that an overlay is not warranted at this time because the regional plan would

be effective. Specific parcels that could potentially support an overlay district were identified for future needs.

Vulnerable Land and Preservation

DWright presented a zoning map to identify specific parcels vulnerable to development, such as those near the quarry or large holdings like the Neilsen family properties.

Discussion occurred regarding the steepness of slopes and environmental constraints that naturally limit development in certain sectors.

Infrastructure and Development Risks

The commission discussed the infrastructure requirements for data centers, noting a significant lack of local capacity for power and law enforcement.

Mention was made of an Eli Lilly plant in Upper Mac that may require water from outside the municipality due to local shortages.

While some areas have high power capacity near substations, others face challenges with steep terrain and wetlands.

The group considered how existing industrial areas might be filled up, potentially forcing developers to seek land in neighboring townships, it was noted that once it fills it continues to carry the district designation.

Future Protective Strategies

The commission decided to focus on strengthening the ordinances rather than creating a new overlay district at this time.

Members suggested making small zoning "tweaks," such as adding specific regulations for generator noise and water use in commercial zones.

Dwright will provide contact information for managers and zoning officers in surrounding municipalities to facilitate better communication, and reach out to them for electronic maps.

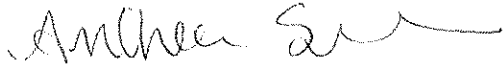
The group planned to review high-resolution digital zoning maps from neighboring townships to better monitor potential shifts in land use.

Livestreaming Meetings

A discussion occurred regarding a potential joint meeting between the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors concerning camera usage.

A motion was made by KStever and seconded by JBannon to adjourn the meeting at 8:09, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Andrea Silvestri".

Andrea Silvestri

Planning Commission Secretary of Lower Milford Township