

PLANNING COMMISSION
Hanover Township Northampton County
3630 JACKSONVILLE ROAD
BETHLEHEM, PA 18017

Minutes of the April 6, 2026 Meeting

Meeting #999 of the Hanover Township Northampton County Planning Commission scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2026 was convened at 7:30 pm by Chairman Barry Check.

Planning Commission members in attendance:

Barry Check
Paul Borosky
Gordon Campbell (via phone)
Richard Kanaskie
Glynis Daniels
Kevin Lea
Richard Mannix

Others in attendance:

James Milot, Hanover Engineering Associates, Inc.
Judy Holladay, Planning Commission Clerk
Public – one

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion by R. Mannix and seconded by K. Lea to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2026 Planning Commission meeting as presented was approved.

Vote: Borosky, yes; Campbell, yes; Daniels, yes; Kanaskie, Yes; Lea, Yes; Mannix, yes; Check, yes

DEVELOPMENTS, PLANNING & ZONING

Members of the Planning Commission reviewed a proposed amendment to the Hanover Township code of Ordinances Section 1. Chapter 185, Article II, Section 180-12 to define and add specific requirements for data centers and data center accessory uses. The following comments and recommendations were discussed.

Section 185-35 D. (29)

It was noted that Data Centers will be a Conditional Use in the PIBD District.

Section 185-38 D. (11) (e)

It was noted computer and data processing uses were eliminated from the AFHBD.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (a) (1) Dimensional Standards

“Any lot in which the Data Centers and Data Center Accessory Uses are to be situated shall not be closer than 1,000 feet to any zoning district boundary of the PIBD Zoning District at any point, except that such lot shall not be closer than 500 feet to the Hanover Township/Bethlehem Township common boundary at any point.”

The Planning Commission would like clarification of whether the lot boundary or the use is subject to the 1,000 and 500 offsets.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (b) (1) Screening and Fencing

~~“Data Centers and Data Center Accessory Uses shall be totally fenced and screened. The fence shall be chain link fence no less than eight feet high, and the fence shall be set back at least 20 feet from all property lines and shall be set back at least to the building restriction line along the front lot line.~~ The screening of Data Centers and Data Center Accessory Uses shall be at least equivalent to the Township construction standards for a twenty-foot planting screen.”

The Planning Commission requests that fencing be eliminated as a requirement. Title becomes “Screening” and the narrative changes as above.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (c) Water and Sewer (2)

The water feasibility study shall include the following information at a minimum:

- [a] The projected water demands of the Data Center;
- [b] The source of water to be used;
- [c] A description of how water will be used, including the amount or proportion of water to be used for each purpose (e.g. cooling, humidity control, fire suppression, and domestic usage);
- [d] *Cooling water shall be a closed-loop system with no discharge.*
- [e] The long-term safe yield of the water source;
- [f] A description of the amount or portion of water withdrawn that will be recycled or discharged and by what means;

The Planning Commission requests that the ordinance have an additional bullet point and specify “Water used for cooling purposes shall be a closed-loop system” as indicated above. This is regardless of public or non-public sources of water.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (c) Water and Sewer (4)

The applicant shall demonstrate that adequate means of wastewater disposal, including domestic wastewater and wastewater used for ~~cooling or~~ industrial purposes, have been provided and approved by the Sewage Enforcement Officer of the Township and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. *Cooling water shall be a closed-loop system with no discharge.*

The Planning Commission requests that the ordinance specify “Cooling water shall be a closed-loop system” as indicated above.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (d) Power Supply

[1] The Data Center shall connect to the electric grid servicing the Township, currently PJM Interconnect LLC (“PJM”). The applicant shall provide documentation from the applicable electric service provider certifying that the necessary capacity is available, and that electric service provider will serve the Data Center. Known impacts on electric rates or availability for other uses directly attributable to the Data Center project shall be noted.

[2] *Self-supplied energy sources must be approved by the Township.*

[3] *The Township encourages the use of renewable energy sources.*

[4] Emergency generating equipment, either portable or permanently constructed on site, is permitted to be used **only** during a complete power outage **and/or during routine maintenance**. Such equipment shall not be used as part of, or supplemental to, the full-time energy source for the Data Center.

[5] *Cycling/Testing of back-up power systems, as part of routine maintenance is acceptable.*

The Planning Commission recommends the additions and changes indicated above.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (e) Emergency Management) (1) (d)

(d) Ensure that all first responders receive adequate training **and equipment** specific to the installed system for the Data Center Use, first responder agencies will be reimbursed for **required equipment and** the time that their first responders spend at the training. **Ensure that all fire retardant systems and materials be clearly marked and appropriate warnings be clearly posted.**

The Planning Commission requests that equipment be added to the developer’s responsibility and that any and all fire retardant systems and materials be clearly marked and appropriate warnings be clearly posted.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (g) (1)

Data Centers are to be provided with **at least** one parking space per 1,000 square feet of floor area designed and intended to be accessible regularly by employees, plus **one parking space for each company vehicle to be kept on site** or one parking space for every one employee, based upon the maximum number of employees on site during the largest shift **plus one parking space for each company vehicle to be kept on site, whichever is the greater number of spaces.**

The Planning Commission recommends that parking requirements be updated to reflect the verbiage above. The Planning Commission also recommends that 185-17 C. be updated to reflect the same language for warehouses.

Section 185-54 E. (37) (h)

The Planning Commission recommends adding a new section requiring “A Vibration study, in accordance with Section 185-20 C, (3) shall be conducted for existing and as-built conditions to verify compliance with the Ordinance.”

Section 185-54 E. (37) (i)

The Planning Commission recommends adding a new section requiring “A Noise study, in accordance with Section 185-20 C. (3) shall be conducted for existing and as-built conditions to verify compliance with the Ordinance.”

Section 185-54 E. (37) (j)

The Planning Commission recommends adding a new section requiring “A Decommission/Electronic Waste Plan shall be submitted with the conditional use application outlining procedures for safe removal and recycling or disposal of server infrastructure, hazardous material, batteries, electronic waste and related products, which will apply in cases when the data center is updated or decommissioned. The Plan shall be subject to approval by the Township.”

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

A member of the public commented on noise ordinance fines.

ENGINEERING REPORT

Farmhouse construction has started. There will be detours on Jacksonville Road associated with the utility work in the roadway.

Developer of Lot #11 requested a meeting with Hanover Engineering to review the comment letter.

Penn DOT issued permits for the Highland Ave projects.

NEW BUSINESS

Next scheduled meeting date is May 4, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned by B. Check at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Holladay
Planning Commission Clerk

Approved 4/6/26