

WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Minutes of the first February meeting

February 3, 2026

Members Present

Keith Choper, Chair
Dan Cote
Virginia Kerlake
Todd Rouse
Priyanka Gupta (via Zoom)
Denise Jones (via Zoom)

Township Personnel Present

John Weller, Planning Director
Patrick Gorman, Township Planner

Rajesh Kumbhardare, Supervisor

I. CALL TO ORDER

Keith Choper called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and asked all to rise for the pledge to the flag and for a moment of silence for our first responders.

II. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

In the course of the review, Mr. Choper expressed concern that the Staff memorandum on “discussion on zoning for data centers” dated January 2, 2026 included a statement that “...the impact [of small data centers] upon surrounding properties is still negligible.” He requested that this statement be stricken from the memo. The Commission was agreeable to this, and Mr. Weller said he would do so.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of January 6, 2026, including the memo revision described by Mr. Choper. (Cote/Kerlake)

ACTION: Passed, 6-0

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jones asked if a written Code of Conduct could be provided to members of the Planning Commission outlining permissible and non-permissible behavior. Mr. Weller said he will address this with the Township Manager and suggested that the Township Solicitor may have an outline for review. There was also a question as to what constitutes a quorum of the Commission. Mr. Weller responded, “fifty percent plus one.”

IV. PLANS

Green Fig Land, LLC

Site Address: 215 Valley Creek Blvd.

First Review: Land Development

A land development plan for stormwater management facilities for an industrial development on an adjacent property in East Whiteland Township.

Mr. Weller explained that due to miscommunication, SSM reviewed an earlier version of the Applicant’s plan. Because significant changes were made from the original plan, the Applicant agreed to come off tonight’s agenda and continue the matter until the February

17, 2026, meeting when a current review by SSM will be available. Mr. Choper requested that someone from SSM attend the February 17 meeting. He also requested that SSM provide clear direction in their reviews, noting the difference between “should” and “shall.”

Mr. Cote asked the status of the Applicant’s project in East Whiteland Township. Mr. Weller advised that the Applicant met with the East Whiteland Planning Commission on January 26. No recommendation was issued, and the Applicant is expected to return on March 26. Ms. Kerlake noted that East Whiteland’s Solicitor suggested a new application may be needed as opposed to an amended application due to the extent of proposed changes from the original plan. Ms. Kerlake asked if there are any procedural restrictions or risks if West Whiteland acts before East Whiteland. Mr. Weller explained that there is nothing that would prevent West Whiteland from acting independently of East Whiteland but noted there could be a risk to the Applicant and recounted a previous application for the same site wherein a stormwater basin plan was approved in West Whiteland to serve an assisted living facility to be built in East Whiteland. The facility was never built, and West Whiteland required the Applicant to remove the constructed basin and return the site to its previous condition.

Mr. Choper asked who ensures that only stormwater is coming to the proposed basin and not some other liquids. Mr. Weller said stormwater facilities are proposed on the East Whiteland site as well, adding that SSM coordinates with the Applicant’s engineers. Noting that the site is a SuperFund site, Mr. Choper asked what assurances we have that the proposed development will not compromise the remedy. Mr. Kumbhardare advised that testing was previously done on the site when the area was being considered for the Township’s new Public Works facility. Mr. Choper suggested the Applicant may be excavating deeper and said the Township should get assurance that the site is clean. Ms. Kerlake said no underground basin¹ is proposed. Mr. Rouse asked if there is a mechanism to certify the soil. Mr. Weller advised that most of what the Applicant will be excavating is material that West Whiteland required them to fill back in and explained that the goal of civil engineers to “balance the site” as it is expensive not to.

Mr. Rouse asked for clarification on the Township’s policy on waivers, expressing concern that many waivers are granted by the Township. Mr. Weller explained that the standard for granting a waiver is that the Applicant show some kind of hardship in complying. As an example, our Stormwater Management Ordinance requires that stormwater be managed through onsite infiltration; however, this is not always suitable in areas of karst geology, as those areas are prone to sinkhole formation. Since much of the Township is characterized by karst, the Township will waive the infiltration requirement as the waiver is in the best interest of public safety and welfare. Mr. Weller said when waivers are granted by the Township, it is done with the support of the Township’s consultants. Mr. Rouse questioned waivers from the open space requirement. Mr. Weller said that the open space is not waived, but the Ordinance provides an option whereby developers may pay a fee in lieu of setting aside land. Revenue from these fees is deposited into the Township’s Open Space Fund. At this point, Mr. Gorman advised that this discussion was not on tonight’s agenda and suggested a workshop be scheduled and properly advertised to discuss such concerns.

Mr. Cote asked if the Applicant’s project would be constructed in phases. Mr. Weller said he did not know.

¹ While all the proposed basins are excavated features, they are open to the sky rather than covered.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Update on proposed regulations for data centers

Mr. Weller said he has completed the first draft of a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding data centers. The draft will be provided to members at the end of this week, so they have extra time to review before discussion at the February 17 meeting. Mr. Choper expressed concern about the rapid pace of change in technology making it difficult to draft regulations that can cover every possibility. He added that Staff will need to keep up with the changes. Mr. Weller said the amendment will focus on the impact of data centers on the community and the environment and will include decommissioning requirements as technology seems to get smaller, requiring less space. Mr. Choper noted talk of small nuclear reactors proposed to satisfy the energy needs of data centers; Mr. Kumbhardare added that there is also talk about moving data centers into space.

2. 2025 Annual Report

Mr. Weller advised that the 2025 Annual Report required by the Municipalities Planning Code will be available at the February 17 meeting. That agenda will also include the review of the Green Fig plan continued from tonight, the re-submission of the land development plan for 1358 Glen Echo Rd., and discussion on the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment concerning data centers.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Recording Secretary,



John Weller, AICP
Director of Planning & Zoning