

WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES

Minutes of the second February meeting

February 17, 2026

**Members Present**

Keith Choper, Chair  
Dan Cote  
Priyanka Gupta  
Denise Jones (via Zoom)  
Todd Rouse  
Virginia Kerlake (arrived 9:28 p.m. via Zoom)

**Township Personnel Present**

John Weller, Planning Director  
Patrick Gorman, Township Planner  
Pam Gural-Bear, Township Manager

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Keith Choper called the meeting to order at 7:03 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**

Mr. Choper and Ms. Jones made comments/corrections to the draft minutes of February 3, 2026.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 3, 2026, including the comments and corrections made by Mr. Choper and Ms. Jones.  
(Cote/Rouse)

ACTION: Passed, 5-0

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment on items not on the agenda.

**IV. PLANS**

1. Oak Knoll, LLC (Shenkin Tract)  
Site Address: 1358 Glen Echo Rd.  
First Review: Subdivision & Land Development Plan  
Project Description: Subdivision of a 4-acre parcel into five lots, one of which will accommodate an existing dwelling

John Weller provided an overview of the plan to divide a four-acre lot in the R-2 Residential zoning district the Ivy Glen neighborhood into five lots: one to accommodate the existing historic Daniel Merdith House and four for development with single-family homes.

The Planning Commission saw this project as a sketch plan on June 18, 2024; tonight's plan is substantially similar to that plan. Mr. Weller confirmed that all the proposed lots satisfy the minimum requirements of the R-2 zoning district, and the proposed development on each lot complies with the applicable area and bulk standards.

The Historical Commission reviewed the plan on July 7 and August 11, 2025, after which a motion was issued supporting approval of the plan with conditions to consider reducing the number of lots and to preserve a visual connection between the historic house and spring house ruins; the motion also memorialized concerns about the proposed landscaping. Mr. Weller reported that the current plan has addressed the Historical Commission concerns, except that there has not been any reduction in the number of lots.

Mr. Weller then introduced Kent Morey, of Spotts, Stevens & McCoy (SSM), the Township's engineering consultant, who was in attendance to address any stormwater concerns.

Mr. Weller summarized the consultant reviews:

- SSM has no objection to the requested waivers from the Stormwater Ordinance or the sidewalk requirement, noting that there are no sidewalks in the area nor are any shown on the Township's Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan; minor revisions to the stormwater management facilities are indicated in comments #18, #19, and #25; the Applicant should be required to restore the portion of Glen Echo Rd. that will be excavated to install utilities.
- Carroll Engineering noted that the existing home has a gravity connection to public sewerage and that gravity connections are shown for the proposed homes as well. Treatment is to be provided by the West Goshen Township Authority.
- Theurkauf also supports the requested waiver from the sidewalk requirement, subject to the Applicant making a contribution to the Township's sidewalk fund equivalent to the construction cost of the sidewalk that could be required. The Applicant has offered to make a payment to the Township tree bank for the compensatory plantings that they could not fit on the site, but Theurkauf suggested some additional locations for trees that would make the plan more nearly compliant.
- Bowman supports the waiver from the sidewalk requirement and advises that the project is subject to payment of a traffic impact fee totaling \$7,245.00.

Mr. Weller advised that the most significant concerns have been resolved. Lots 3 & 5 share a driveway that crosses lot 4 leaving a strip of land unusable and asked if it could be reconfigured to eliminate that strip. Mr. Weller further noted that while all proposed lots comply with Zoning requirements, the impervious cover on Lot 4 is only 11 sq.ft. below the limit, severely limiting the ability of a future owner to add improvements. He further noted that no water supply connection is shown for the existing house, and that a separate water supply line is needed for the fire suppression sprinklers required for the new homes.

Referencing comment #28 of the SSM review, which states "further investigation must be completed to determine the discharge point [of the yard drains on Lot 2] and if needed properly account for it in any downstream conveyance," Mr. Choper asked to what extent this may require a modification to the plan. Mr. Morey said he did not think it will change the plans but should be investigated. Mr. Choper then asked if the Commission's review tonight is premature. Mr. Morey said it was not as this is a preliminary plan review. Mr. Weller then explained that generally the Township approves plans as "preliminary/final". Mr. Morey said he did not view the issue as a big concern given that the Applicant has a fair number of other issues to resolve. Mr. Choper again questioned whether review this evening was premature. Mr. Weller said it was not, adding that the Applicant has an opportunity to respond to outstanding issues in the course of the meeting. If they do so to the satisfaction of the Commission, the Commission may choose to act on the plan this evening. Mr. Choper advised Commission members to keep this in mind throughout the meeting, adding that he does not think the Commission should send

a plan to the Board of Supervisors until all issues are resolved. Ms. Jones agreed with Mr. Choper's comments that the Commission should send a "clean" plan to the Board of Supervisors.

In attendance on behalf of the Applicant were attorney Patrick McKenna of Gawthrop Greenwood; civil engineer Jack Robinson of JMR Engineering; and the developer, Glen White. Mr. McKenna said the plan has been revised three times, and he feels that the remaining concerns are minor. He said that the great majority of the consultant comments are "will comply" items, and that they would address the others tonight. He added that the Applicant does not own nor control the existing historic home and lot.

Mr. McKenna reviewed the concerns in Mr. Weller's memo of February 13, 2026. Regarding the compensatory plantings issue, Mr. McKenna advised that a landscape architect has been engaged that will visit the site with Mr. Theurkauf, although he expects that the full number of trees cannot be accommodated and that some contribution to the tree bank will be required. The Applicant is withdrawing their earlier request for a waiver from the requirement to use a registered landscape architect. The Historical Commission suggested redistributing plantings to be partially on the lot with the historic structure; the owner has agreed, and the Applicant will make this change. The Applicant will return to the Historical Commission to present the final landscape plan and to update them on the preservation of the spring house ruins.

Regarding stormwater management, Mr. McKenna said the Applicant will make the revisions indicated in comments #18, #19, and #25 of the SSM review. Mr. Morey and Mr. Robinson had a technical discussion about comment #18 and came to agreement about how it should be resolved. Mr. Robinson said that they will provide curbs as per comments #11 and #12 of the SSM; Mr. Morey noted that the curb should extend along the entire frontage of Lots 1 and 2. In response to comment #25, Mr. Robinson said they will provide a concrete outlet structure.

Regarding Mr. Weller's concern about the driveway across Lot 4, Mr. McKenna noted that the area in question is landscaped to provide a visual buffer for the historic structure. This design also addresses both a request from the Historical Commission to allow a view of the historic house from the street and a sight-distance concern raised by Bowman. The driveway will be maintained by the owners of Lots 3 and 5 in accordance with a maintenance agreement.

There was discussion about the proposed lots being so close to the limits for impervious coverage. Mr. Choper noted that while the proposed lots may comply with Ordinance requirements, future owners will seek relief from the Zoning Hearing Board. He suggested some type of deed restriction to prevent this, but Mr. McKenna said he cannot legally bind future owners. Mr. Choper then suggested smaller houses. Mr. Weller noted that the Zoning Hearing Board has recently had numerous requests from property owners seeking relief from the impervious coverage limit. Mr. Morey added that the stormwater management is designed for square footage shown on the plan. If impervious coverage is added, it could exceed what the system was designed to manage. Mr. McKenna responded that the Zoning Hearing Board now often requires drainage and stormwater permits as a condition of relief from the impervious cover limit for even small increases in impervious cover. Mr. McKenna said the Applicant is agreeable to providing a notice to any future owner advising of the lot limits but is not agreeable to a deed restriction. Ms. Jones encouraged exploring a deed restriction to ensure clarity on the matter, to manage the expectations of future property owners, and to reduce the burden on the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. Choper asked that the plan show the maximum impervious allowed on each lot. Mr. Robinson noted that the plan already features a chart with this information for use during the permitting process to assure that what is built does not exceed the limits. Mr. McKenna said

he can make sure the future owner gets a copy of the as-built plan but cannot stop a future owner from seeking a variance.

Mr. McKenna acknowledged that the existing home must be connected to public water and that fire flow lines are needed for the proposed houses; the plan will be revised accordingly.

Regarding SSM comment #9, Mr. Weller advised that the minimum street width standard applies only to new streets; no waiver is needed to allow the current street width to remain as is.

Referencing SSM comment #28, Mr. Robinson stated that they know that the pipe in question is a roof drain from the existing house. They will investigate further to confirm that it discharges properly to the back yard of the same lot.

Mr. McKenna said the Carroll Engineering concerns have been addressed; the Applicant will comply with the Theurkauf comments and will correct the plant list.

Regarding SSM comment #13, Mr. Morey noted that most utilities go underground, and the utility poles are on the opposite side of the street. Depending on how the utility connections are made, full-width restoration of the street may be required. Mr. McKenna said he understood and without further information he indicated the Applicant will comply.

SSM comment #20 directs the Applicant to provide the calculations for swales and storm sewers. Given the design of the proposed lots, Mr. Morey is concerned that even minor changes would create a ripple effect. Mr. Robinson acknowledged this concern and agreed to provide the calculations, adding that each lot has its own grading plan: this is not a system where one lot flows to the next. The flow is localized and directed to an on-lot system, not an off-lot system, and the swales assure that water is directed properly. Mr. Morey noted a swale along the west side of the tract that crosses several of the proposed lots. Mr. Robinson responded that this swale is an existing feature related to the apartment complex on the adjoining lot and is maintained by the Applicant.

Noting that the Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) review was of the 2024 plan, Mr. Choper questioned if they should not review the latest version. Mr. Weller said the plans are similar, and the CCPC review is limited to general planning concepts. Mr. Weller said he is satisfied with the review of the earlier plan and expected that the County would have the same comments about the most recent plan.

Mr. Choper questioned the practicality of the plan notes directing homeowners to inspect stormwater facilities after a two-year event. Mr. Weller said all developers are required to enter into a Stormwater Management Facilities Maintenance Agreement, which includes an inspection requirement. The Township has a full-time employee who tracks these agreements and communicates with owners after such events. Manager Pamela Gural-Bear noted that more than ninety such agreements are in place, and we receive inspection reports regularly. Another Township employee works with property owners with no agreements.

Mr. Rouse asked how the wetlands will be impacted. Mr. Robinson said the wetlands are due to a spring on the site. The wetlands will not be disturbed, but the Applicant will be stabilizing and preserving the spring house ruins as requested by the Historical Commission.

Ms. Gupta asked about damage during construction. Mr. Robinson responded that this is addressed by the erosion and sedimentation controls on sheet 7 of the plan set. These are

required by the County Conservation District, which will inspect the site regularly during construction.

Mr. Choper called for public comment on the plan.

Mr. Terry Goldstein of 1359 Glen Echo Rd. stated that the property lines of Lot 2 had been changed since the Historical Commission reviewed the plan, and the sight line from the historic home to the spring house has not been maintained. He said the proposed curbs in front of Lots 1 and 2 will collect water and said there is a stream that runs year-round that is not shown on the Applicant's plan. Mr. Goldstein presented a number of photographs showing flooding in the neighborhood. He noted that he and his neighbors are concerned that the proposed plan will change the character of the neighborhood and increase flooding. He then read a statement encouraging the Commission to address a number of issues before considering approval of the plan, including:

- Deed-restrict owners of Lot 4 from seeking any variances.
- Current flooding of Broad Run, making Gypsy La. impassable.
- Existing homes are single-story of about 2,000 sq.ft. with a one-car garage; the proposed homes are two stories, 4,000 sq.ft., and have two-car garages. This will destroy the character of the neighborhood as noted in the reviews by Patterhn Ives and Commonwealth Heritage, the Township's historic preservation consultants.
- Historical Commission requested Applicant to consider a reduction in the number of proposed lots; the Applicant has not done so.
- The connection between the historic home and the spring house has been severed.

Mr. Patrick Smiley of 231 Twin Oaks La. presented a video and stated that the area floods continuously. He also said that a fire truck would have difficulty accessing the proposed lots.

Mr. McKenna said they do not deny that the area currently experiences flooding but maintained that this is due in part to the recent increase in the severity and frequency of storms combined with the current lack of any stormwater management provisions. He added that the stream and the easements are shown on the current plans. Regarding the curbing, he said this is a requirement of the Township, and as for the size of the proposed homes, he said the housing market has changed over the last fifty years, and larger homes are in demand.

Mr. Goldstein said the driveways are within the regulations but are very long and he questioned how anyone would get out in winter weather.

Mr. Cote said he was initially inclined to vote on a motion this evening but wished to hold off until both neighbors' and Commission members' comments are better addressed; all Commission members agreed. Mr. McKenna said the Applicant will revise the plan to address the various comments and will plan to return to the Planning Commission on April 14

## 2. Green Fig Land, LLC

Site Address: 215 Valley Creek Blvd.

First Review: Land Development

Stormwater management facilities to serve an industrial development on an adjacent property in East Whiteland Township.

Mr. Weller summarized the project to construct stormwater management facilities at 215 Valley Creek Blvd. to serve a proposed data center in East Whiteland Township. The site is a 25-acre

vacant lot in the Office/Laboratory zoning district. The Chester Valley Trail is to the north, East Whiteland Township line to the east, and the property to the south is the site of West Whiteland's Public Works Facility. Valley Ck. flows across the site.

In January 2024, the Applicant submitted a similar land development plan for stormwater management facilities related to a data center on the East Whiteland property. The Board approved that plan on April 10, 2024, but the Applicant has since enlarged the data center, affecting the stormwater runoff characteristics. Due to the scope of the revision to the stormwater facilities, the Applicant was directed to submit updated drawings for consultant review and re-approval by the Township. Tonight is the Planning Commission's first review of the updated drawings.

Due to the nature of the proposed improvements, SSM and Theurkauf are the only consultants to provide reviews. The CCPC reviewed this plan as part of the overall project (i.e., including the East Whiteland portion) in December 2023 and advised that they would not review the West Whiteland portion separately, so there is no new review from the CCPC.

The Applicant was represented by attorney Alyson Zarro of Riley, Riper, Hollin & Colagreco; environmental consultant Jennifer Fields; civil engineer Jack Robinson of JMR Engineering; and Charles Lyddane and Greg Walters of Green Fig.

Referencing a January 29, 2026, article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, Mr. Choper asked how the proposed expansion of the data center affects the plan before the Commission this evening. Mr. Robinson confirmed that the proposed expansion of the East Whiteland data center is the reason for tonight's plan review: the basin design now shown will accommodate the runoff from the larger buildings now under consideration by East Whiteland. He explained that the original facility was over-designed, so the size of the basin remains unchanged, but rain gardens have been added and expanded. If East Whiteland Township should not approve the proposed expansion, the Applicant will proceed with the previous plan that was approved by both Townships. While no further expansion of the buildings is being contemplated at this time, Township Staff will remain in contact with East Whiteland to assure that any additional changes to the development there that affect stormwater runoff are addressed as necessary.

Mr. Robinson reviewed the history of the site and described the basin now proposed as a two-acre wet pond holding eight feet of water with a complex outlet structure. He stated that the basin is over-designed according to our Ordinance.

Mr. Rouse asked what percentage of the pond will be filled with water. Mr. Robinson replied that the pond will be a permanent pool eight feet deep and is 15% to 20% larger than needed. Slow-release rain gardens sufficient for a two-year storm have been added: stormwater will run through a rain garden before entering the basin. The plants in the rain garden will filter the water before it is slowly released into the basin; the rain gardens will be lined to prevent sinkholes. If the basin should fill, a reverse siphon allows colder water from the bottom of the basin to be released first to Valley Ck., reducing thermal pollution. Mr. Choper noted that other recent land developments have systems that discharge into Valley Ck. and questioned their impact. Mr. Morey confirmed this, adding that this project is farther upstream and would not contribute to downstream flooding. The facilities will restrict the rate at which water enters the creek to be no more than the current rate.

Mr. Rouse asked if the pond will look like a hole in the ground with water in it. Mr. Robinson said it will be well landscaped and maintained. Mr. Weller added that it is a naturalistic basin designed to be aesthetically pleasing with more gently sloping sides. Mr. Robinson noted that the water level in the basin will decrease during periods of drought.

*[Commission member Virginia Kerlake arrived via Zoom at this point.]*

When asked if the pond will be fenced, it was noted that there is no Township requirement for fencing. Mr. Rouse stated that he would prefer it not to be fenced, and Mr. Robinson said that the slopes around the basin are relatively flat to prevent anyone from tumbling in.

Mr. Lyddane confirmed that the data center will be air-cooled, not water-cooled, eliminating the possibility of cooling water entering the stormwater basin; there will be no floor drains. Mr. Robinson confirmed that only rainwater will enter the stormwater basin. Most of the new impervious cover is roof area, which is relatively clean. Oil separators will treat runoff from the parking lots, although there will not be a lot of cars on the site.

Mr. Rouse said he would not support any waiver from required plantings noting that there is plenty of room onsite for all the required plantings. Mr. Weller clarified that the requested waiver concerns the placement of the landscaping, not the amount. Mr. Robinson added that the previous project included the existing landscaping along the Chester Valley Trail, and they are adding more. Mr. Walters agreed to have their landscape architect walk the site with Ed Theurkauf, the Township's landscaping consultant, to advise on additional plantings.

Regarding the sequence of construction for the entire project, Mr. Robinson said they would excavate the basin first.

Mr. Gorman asked about controls for mosquitoes and geese as well as general access to the site. Mr. Robinson replied that the basin is a permanent pool and is too deep to attract mosquitoes. They can add features to discourage geese, should they be a problem. The sole access to the site will be from East Whiteland.

Mr. Lyddane said that there will be diesel generators for back-up power. The generators will be enclosed in a containment vessel to control sound. The generators will not be used to power the plant on a regular basis, but they will be tested for one hour per month. There are 32 generators for each of the two proposed buildings.

Returning the discussion on geese controls, Mr. Robinson said that no controls are shown on the plan, but they could be added; Mr. Lyddane said on-site security will chase any geese away. In response to a question from Mr. Choper, Mr. Lyddane said that he was amenable to providing and maintaining geese controls should the Township request them.

Mr. Choper asked about aeration of the pond. Mr. Walters said they will monitor the water quality and if it becomes an issue they will address it. Regarding soil contamination, Ms. Fields stated that Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has confirmed that the West Whiteland site was never used for industrial purposes; a plume of contaminated groundwater is still being monitored. Mr. Choper asked about hitting the contamination during excavation. Mr. Lyddane said this was not an issue, since the contamination plume was 32 feet below the surface, well below the area to be excavated. Ms. Fields added that the EPA approved the prior plan and is currently reviewing this current plan to confirm that this is not a risk.

Referencing comment #18 of the SSM review letter, Mr. Choper noted that "details of the diversion structures must be provided before SSM can determine if the stormwater facilities will function as designed". Mr. Morey said he received those details from the Applicant and has determined that the facilities will function as intended. Ms. Zarro said the Applicant will comply to SSM's satisfaction.

Ms. Gupta suggested a condition to monitor water quality.

Responding to questions from Ms. Kerlake, Ms. Zarro confirmed that the changes to the present plan are in response to the expansion of the data center, adding that if East Whiteland should not approve the expansion, the Applicant will proceed with the previously approved plan. Ms. Kerlake asked why not wait until the plan is approved in East Whiteland before proceeding to West Whiteland review. Ms. Zarro said they are trying to run the plans on parallel tracks, adding that the risk is on the Applicant, and there is no major impact to West Whiteland.

Ms. Kerlake asked about storage of fuel for the generators, expressing concern about a possible leak into West Whiteland. Mr. Lyddane said the fuel will be stored in double wall tanks. Mr. Choper asked about firefighting chemicals that would be used in the event of an industrial fire. Mr. Lyddane said they are working with the East Whiteland Fire Marshal and will follow protocols for industrial events to contain them properly. Mr. Choper said West Whiteland should be alert to any potential issue.

Regarding the waiver noted in comment #3 of the SSM review, Mr. Morey said this waiver is not required and was his error.

There was no public comment on the plan.

MOTION: To recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the land development plan entitled "The Data Centers," a 14-sheet plan set prepared by JMR Engineering, LLC, dated January 31, 2024, and most recently revised February 3, 2026 (the "Plan"), with the eleven following waivers and conditions:

1. The Plan is approved as a Final Plan pursuant to §281-10.H of the West Whiteland Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance ("S/LDO").
2. Waiver of §270-15.T(2)(b) of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow fill within Zone 2 of the Riparian Buffer Area as shown on the Plan, pursuant to comment #1 of the Spotts, Stevens and McCoy ("SSM") review dated February 12, 2026.
3. Waiver of §270-20 of the Stormwater Management Ordinance such no infiltration of stormwater need be provided, pursuant to comment #2 of the SSM review dated February 12, 2026.
4. Waiver of §281-35.A and §281-35.E of the S/LDO such that no additional plantings are needed to satisfy the perimeter and screen buffer requirements, pursuant to comments #1 and #2 of the Theurkauf Design & Planning ("Theurkauf") review dated January 8, 2026. However, the Applicant shall provide additional landscaping satisfactory to the Township to mitigate the visual impact of the development as seen from the Chester Valley Trail, not to exceed the number of plantings that could be required pursuant to the said sections.
5. Waiver of §281-34.G of the S/LDO such that existing trees of 12" or greater DBH that are to be removed need not be identified, pursuant to comment #4 of the Theurkauf review dated January 8, 2026.
6. In the event that geese or other pests are attracted to the basin to the extent that they create a health hazard or nuisance in the determination of the Township, the owner shall install and maintain control measures to address the issue to the satisfaction of the Township.

7. In the event that mechanical aeration devices are needed to maintain the water quality in the basin to the satisfaction of the Township, such devices shall be installed and maintained at the direction of and to the satisfaction of the Township.
8. Execution and recording of the Township's Stormwater Facilities Maintenance Agreement and Landscaping Restrictive Covenant, pursuant to Township practice. If the Applicant makes no material revisions or additions to the standard form of the said documents, then the Township Manager should be authorized to sign these forms on behalf of the Township.
9. Execution of a Developer Agreement and a Financial Security Agreement pursuant to Township practice. The amount of such security shall be based upon construction cost estimates for the site improvements, including landscaping, to be provided by the Applicant, which shall be reviewed and deemed sufficient by SSM and Theurkauf. If the Applicant makes no material revisions or additions to the standard form of the said agreements, then the Township Manager should be authorized to sign these forms on behalf of the Township.
10. All remaining consultant and Staff concerns shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the Township.
11. Payment of all outstanding Township invoices within 45 days of the date of Final Plan approval by the Board of Supervisors.

(Rouse/Jones)

**ACTION:** Passed 5-1, with Ms. Kerlake opposing.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

**Draft ordinance regarding data centers.**

Due to the lateness of the hour, this matter will be scheduled for discussion at a workshop meeting, date and time to be announced and duly advertised.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**2025 Annual Report**

Mr. Weller stated that the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that a report on planning activity be submitted to the Board of Supervisors by March 1 every year. He distributed copies of the completed report to the Commission members and stated that it will be given to the Board at their meeting on February 25, after which it will be placed on the Township website.

## **VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Weller announced that the Comprehensive Plan Task Force has completed the final draft of the new Township Comprehensive Plan. The MPC requires that the Planning Commission hold a public meeting to present the draft as part of the adoption process. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for some time in April.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m.



Recording Secretary,

John Weller, AICP  
Director of Planning & Zoning