

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes of April 15, 2026**

**Present:** Craig Melograno, Chairman  
Rich Valiga, Vice-Chair  
Danielle Porreca  
Maureen Nunn  
Michael Mrozinski  
Craig Adams  
Robert Sawyer

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager  
Jamie Worman, Asst. Township Manager  
Patty Furber, B&Z Administrator  
Ed Brown, Gilmore & Associates  
Chad Dixson, Bowman

**Absent:**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting of the Lower Gwynedd Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM.

**Approval of Minutes: March 18, 2026**

A motion was made by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Sawyer to approve the minutes of the Lower Gwynedd Township Planning Commission from the meeting of March 18, 2026. The motion carried unanimously.

**Subdivision:**

**#26-07SUBD**

**1512 & 1524 Cedar Hill Rd. - Resubmission  
Tisman Group, LLC.**

Present for the applicant was Ms. Susan Rice, P.E. with STA Engineering who presented the resubmission. Ms. Rice explained that the applicant had appeared before the Planning Commission (PC) a few months earlier and received a recommendation for approval. After going to the Board of Supervisors (BOS), they realized they no longer needed the open space component that was originally proposed, so it was removed from the plan and required a resubmission of the application.

Mr. Melograno clarified that the applicant had discovered they could develop under different zoning district requirements that did not require open space, since they had larger lots that negated the need for the open space overlay bonus. Mr. Brown confirmed that the waivers had not changed from their previous submission.

Ms. Rice stated they had discussions with the BOS that resulted in the decision to use paved trails rather than limestone surfacing as originally proposed.

Mr. Brown indicated that most comments in their review letter were plan cleanup related, with some focus on tree replacement requirements. The applicant confirmed they would comply with tree replacement requirements and had resolved the tree waiver issues through upsizing and the double counting of evergreens as previously recommended.

Mr. Melograno reaffirmed the PC's previous recommendations, which will remain the same, but exclude the open space.

A motion was made by Mr. Sawyer and seconded by Mr. Adams to recommend preliminary/final approval to the BOS based on the following conditions:

1. The applicant is to comply with the tree replacement requirements in both ordinances and Gilmore's acceptance of the arborist findings.
2. The P.C. supports:
  - a. the curb and pipe waiver, and the concurrent submission waiver for preliminary/final land development
  - b. an asphalt trail but are not opposed to gravel trails
  - c. not requiring driveway aprons
  - d. The applicant will comply with the remaining comments in both Gilmore and Bowman's review letters.

**The motion passed with a 7-0 vote.**



**Rezone/Text/Map Amendment & Conditional Use**  
**321 Norristown Rd.**  
**BT 309, LLC**

**#26-06RZ/CU**

Mr. Melograno began by establishing ground rules for the discussion, emphasizing that this was a working session to review the zoning ordinance word-by-word, not a voting meeting. He stressed that the PC needed to discuss the ordinance constructively to make improvements, regardless of their ultimate recommendation, and warned against long speeches or conspiracy theories.

**Project Overview and Changes**

Present for the applicant was Ms. Christen Pionzio from Hamburg, Ruben, Mullen, Maxwell and Lupin introduced the team, including Mr. Michael Markman, President of BET Investments, Mr. Mike McCluskey from AEI, Mr. Peter Clelland, Vice President of Development at BET Investments and Mr. Matt Hammond from Traffic Planning and Design (TPD). Ms. Pionzio stated since the last time they were in front of the PC there have been meetings with neighbors, Old York Road Golf Club and ACTS Gwynedd Estates. She stated that there's been staff recommendations on the ordinance back and forth, and revisions to the plans which resulted in lowering the building by a story, reducing the units from 330 to 278, and a reconfiguration of the buildings along the frontage of the property.

Mr. Markman then outlined the significant modifications made to the original proposal which include: Reduced density from 15 units per acre down to 13.5 units per acre maximum. The total number of units decreased from 330 to 278. A reduction in the building height from 5 stories to 4 stories. An increase in the front paving setback from 10' feet to 75' feet to preserve the existing mature trees. An increase in the front

building setback from 50' feet to 100' feet. Redistributed retail from a "wall" along Norristown Road to two separate buildings and reduced the permitted building height to 55' foot. The project team emphasized that the 46,000 square feet of retail space was modest compared to existing developments, noting it could fit inside a Giant supermarket.

### **Site Design and Architecture**

Mr. Peter Clelland described the enhanced site features, including preserved tree areas with trails and understory plantings, a pollinator garden with meadow areas in the back connected by trail networks, and relocated emergency access to coordinate with the neighboring Gwynedd Estates facility.

Mr. Mike McCluskey presented the architectural approach, emphasizing traditional single-family residential forms adapted for the multi-family building, including gable roofs, natural materials like stone and board-and-batten siding like nearby developments. The design included varied building heights and materials to break up the massing and create a more residential appearance rather than a monolithic structure. The apartment building will feature resort-style amenities including courtyards with pools, barbecue areas, game courts, fire pits, and approximately 15,000 square feet of interior amenity space including work pods, game rooms, and social areas designed to encourage community interaction among residents.

### **Density Analysis**

Mr. Melograno led a detailed discussion about density calculations. The current proposal of 278 units on the site results in an actual density of 11.58 units per acre, while the proposed ordinance language allows for 12 units per acre with a 1.5-unit bonus for workforce housing, totaling 13.5 units per acre maximum. The PC discussed the relationship between the proposed mixed-use district and existing zoning, noting that it essentially combines elements from the current D-1 (office) and MF-3 (multifamily) districts. Mr. Melograno suggested that for precision and to address community concerns about potential increases, the ordinance should be written to cap development at exactly what is being proposed rather than allowing additional units.

### **Traffic Analysis**

Mr. Matt Hammond presented the traffic study findings. He explained that the study area extended from Bethlehem Pike to Tennis Avenue, covering all major intersections in the corridor. The analysis was based on data collected in October 2024 and February 2025, projecting traffic impacts to 2027 and 2032. The study showed net increases of 131 trips in the AM peak hour, 166 in the PM peak hour, and 256 on Saturday, after accounting for existing office building occupancy. Mr. Hammond emphasized that these represented conservative estimates, as the office buildings currently operate at less than full capacity. The trip distribution analysis showed that 34% of traffic would travel toward Bethlehem Pike, only 2% would go north on Route 309, with the remainder distributed to various local destinations. This translates to less than one additional trip per minute on most roadway segments during peak hours. Mr. Hammond confirmed that all traffic counts followed standard engineering practices and would be reviewed by both the township traffic engineer and PennDOT. Mr. Hammond stated that the traffic data was collected over a period of three to four days, which involved collecting traffic counts during one weekday, all day, then condensing that down to the two peak hours with Saturday having 2 counts done. He stated that a post-development trip generation analysis would be completed as requested in Bowman's review letter dated April 10, 2026.

### **D-1 District:**

Mr. Melograno stated that there are certain provisions in the current zoning district D-1 that are not in the new ordinance that should be added. He suggested that a full traffic study should be added under the criteria for conditional use requirements for mixed-use. He then requested to review site lighting and what might be best suited for the mixed-use development criteria. Ms. Gleason stated that she and Ms. Worman have been looking over the ordinance and have some suggested language that came from the BOS

discussion. She stated they would take a closer look and get back to the applicant with their suggestions. Ms. Pionzio stated that they would review the sign ordinance and parking.

**Audience Summary:**

Several residents that were in attendance raised questions about the traffic study methodology, data collection procedures, and coordination with other planned developments in the area. Some questions and comments consisted of why the proposed apartment building couldn't be reduced to 3-stories which would lower the overall density of the site. The possible implications of rezoning for future redevelopment of the ACTS Gwynedd Estates property and if spot zoning could be an option. Ms. Donna Thompson from ACTS was in the audience and confirmed that there were no intentions of any future redevelopment of their property. There were comments regarding the potential impact of traffic from J&J's future development that were not considered in the traffic study. Ms. Gleason stated that J&J met with township staff about what they will be submitting and they estimate there would be around 500 employees spread over 24-7 shifts. Comments regarding the crash analysis report that it seemed inconsistent and when the traffic data was collected it had unknown variables for the proposed retail space. There were inquiries concerning the Berkadia building's future change in use or possible redevelopment. Specifically, noting that a transition to a high-traffic facility like an LA Fitness and "like the YMCA" could necessitate revisions to the traffic study. Ms. Pionzio stated that any change would require the applicant to go through the same process as they are going through right now. She stated that Berkadia has a lease through 2027 and if they don't revitalize the property, they have informed the applicant and township that they are leaving and not renewing their lease.

**Special Conveyance Provisions**

Mr. Melograno questioned what special conveyance provisions meant. Ms. Pionzio stated a special conveyance allows individual financing of different components of the mixed-use development through condominium arrangements while maintaining unified operation of the overall project. This would enable separate financing for the apartment, office, and retail components while preserving required cross-access easements.

**Parking and Signage Ordinance Modifications**

The proposed ordinance includes specific parking requirements tailored to mixed-use developments, allowing for shared parking between uses with different peak demand periods. The PC extensively debated whether these modifications should be incorporated within the mixed-use ordinance or referenced back to the general parking ordinance for consistency.

For signage, the proposed ordinance would permit one pylon sign up to 200 square feet and 20 feet in height, plus wall signs for individual tenants up to 40 square feet per building facade. Mr. Melograno expressed concern about incorporating signage regulations within the zoning ordinance rather than the signage ordinance, though Ms. Worman and Mr. Mrozinski noted this approach provided clearer guidance for the specific use and from a Zoning Officer perspective was the preferred the approach. The PC requested that any signage provisions reference back to general construction and illumination standards in the existing signage ordinance to ensure consistency.

**Workforce Housing Component**

The development includes a workforce housing component providing 10% of units at reduced rents for households earning no more than 100% of the household median income of Montgomery County. The applicant presented rental comparisons showing approximately \$500 per month discounts for qualifying tenants. Mr. Valiga raised detailed questions about the operation and monitoring of the workforce housing program, including marketing requirements, tenant qualification processes, and long-term compliance. Mr. Markman stated that they have committed to third-party auditing through a certified accounting firm that will issue annual reporting to the township to ensure compliance. The PC discussed the narrow

income bands for qualifications and whether retired individuals would be eligible, with clarification that the program is for people who are employed full-time and what incentives would the applicant receive. Mr. Markman stated that they wouldn't receive any type of incentive from the program. Mr. Melograno stated that wasn't necessarily true; by having the workforce housing requirement they would receive a density bonus of 1.5 units per acre which would not go towards workforce housing, so there is a bit of an incentive. Mr. Valiga wanted to know how they will market the workforce housing apartments. Mr. Markman stated they would have to review the workforce housing declaration since they cannot be incentivized to not rent them out. Mr. Valiga questioned the proposed language regarding "lesser units" and wasn't sure what that implied. The applicant stated that they made the decision to remove that from the workforce declaration. Mr. Melograno stated that if the language doesn't apply, it shouldn't be in the declaration and found it limiting. Ms. Pionzio stated that they would work on language for the marketing efforts. Questions arose about the 10-year term of the workforce housing agreement and what happens to existing tenants when that expires. Ms. Pionzio stated it's due for reevaluation in 10 years but doesn't automatically expire and would take a closer look at the declaration.

**Technical Ordinance Review**

The PC systematically reviewed technical aspects of the proposed ordinance, including: Traffic study requirements should be explicitly included or cross-referenced from existing D-1 district provisions, building height limitations and architectural standards, site lighting and other special requirements from the existing D-1 district should be evaluated for inclusion, fire safety requirements including sprinkler systems in parking structures, storm water management and infrastructure requirements. Staff and the applicant's team committed to reviewing existing D-1 district requirements to identify provisions that should be incorporated into the mixed-use ordinance for consistency and completeness.

**Next Steps**

The PC concluded to reconvene after staff and the applicant incorporate the discussed revisions into a refined ordinance draft. Key areas for revision include density calculations, traffic study requirements, parking and signage ordinance coordination, workforce housing program details, and incorporation of relevant D-1 district standards.



**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05

P.M. Respectfully submitted,

*Patty Furber*

Patty Furber, Secretary