

TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

September 16, 2026

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jonathan L. Bolton, Chairman
Robin Ruhmel, Vice Chairman- Absent
Paul Geissinger, Secretary
Lane Donatelli
Bob Falkenstein
Jason Szewczak - Absent
Casey Zelena

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Lee A. Rackus, Bureau Chief of Planning,
Zoning & Development
Elisa Highley, Keystone Consulting Eng.
Jack Gross, Esq., Township Solicitor
Peter Terry, Township Conflict Engineer

Meeting called to order at approximately 7:30 pm.
Chairman Bolton read the Fair Housing Statement as required.

A) SUBMISSION REVIEW:

1) INDEX #2086-26A – VALLEY VIEW – D.R. HORTON

4302 Main Street & 4532 MacArthur Road
Major Subdivision/Land Development
Zoning District: R-4 & C-1
Original Submission Date: 8/13/26
90-Day Expiration Date: 12/13/26

Nate Fox, Obermayer; Keith Marshall, Engineer; Nicole Kline, Traffic Engineer & John Tallman, Entitlements Manager representing the applicant. Mr. Fox stated they were not looking for action from the Commission. They would just like to receive feedback before resubmission.

Chairman Bolton confirmed that the comment letters from KCE dated September 11, 2026 and Ms. Rackus dated August 31, 2026 were received.

Mr. Fox reviewed the project for 35 single-family units. Part of the development will include 3 additional non-residential building lots, 2 will be conveyed to the fire company and 1 is intended to be conveyed to the existing property owner for additional parking. He also briefly went through the comment letters. They will have further meetings with the Township Engineer to work out some outstanding issues re: parking, cartway width, etc.

There was some discussion about who would own and maintain the right-of-way of Hillcrest Lane, part of which would be on the abutting homeowner's property.

Atty. Gross questioned who would own the right-of-way

Mr. Fox said the street would be 'dedicated', but they could deed the area to the homeowners, but have it shown on the plan that it's within the right-of-way.

Ms. Rackus stated that proposal would be a maintenance nightmare and there needs to be a better way to handle it. She also said there might be an issue with the frontage along the 2 remnant parcels that will be retained by the owner. Otherwise, she said they would have to go before the Zoning Hearing Board again.

Mr. Fox confirmed that lots 36A & 36B being conveyed to the Fire Company don't require a

separate subdivision application.

Mr. Marshall said it was their intent to have an HOA, with some open space lots and stormwater management basins being managed by the HOA.

Atty. Gross confirmed that the open space lots would also be owned by the HOA.

Mr. Zelena asked if Lot 37 was going to be the stormwater basin. Mr. Marshall stated that Lot 37 was proposed to be retained by the seller, but more discussion needs to be had with Zoning to confirm.

Mr. Fox reviewed the questions re: Kuhn Lane. Mr. Marshall reviewed their proposal to have Kuhn Lane for emergency vehicle access. Mr. Terry asked if they considered 'right-in, right-out access on MacArthur Road. Ms. Kline said they do not believe PennDOT will permit any access with that location.

Mr. Tallman, said at some point in time there was a discussion with PennDOT and they definitively said 'no access' on to MacArthur Road.

Ms. Kline said that they did not discuss with PennDOT recently but felt their primary concern would be with traffic 'cut-through', which would become an issue for the neighborhood and MacArthur Road.

LVPC submission was made 8/29/26, LCCD will be submitted after they clean a few things up.

The following residents commented on the proposed project:

Harold Sell – 4254 Main Street

Larry Rood – 4318 Main Street

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to table.

Motion by Ms. Ruhmel, second by Mr. Donatelli. Vote taken 6-0 for preliminary to table.

2) INDEX #2087-26A – DVS ENTERPRISES, INC.

2252 Quarry Road & 4239 Reliance Street

Conditional Use

Zoning District: I

Original Submission Date: 8/20/26

60-Day Expiration Date: 11/16/26

Sarah Hogan, Esq., Plunkett & Graver, Paul Scheuermann, VP of DVS, representing the applicant.

Chairman Bolton confirmed that the comment letters from KCE dated September 11, 2026 and Ms. Rackus dated September 1, 2026 were received.

Atty. Hogan reviewed the project at 2252 Quarry Road & 4239 Reliance Street to continue their reclamation process for an additional +/- 22.3 acres. They have applied for NPDES permits and submitted to the LCCD as well.

Mr. Geissinger asked if they would have to submit to all the concerns from 10 years ago, as well as current concerns.

Ms. Rackus said they operated under the conditions of approval from last time, this would be an expansion of the original. Likely those same conditions would be reflected. Mr. Donatelli asked

how access to the property from unauthorized dumping, etc. would be prevented. Mr. Scheuermann noted they have a locked security gate and there is no other access to the quarry.

Atty. Hogan reviewed the conditions from the prior approval and Mr. Scheuermann affirmed that all conditions are being adhered to.

Mr. Geissinger asked where the fill is coming from. Mr. Scheuermann confirmed it was from local projects within 50 miles of Whitehall. It must be clean fill and tested, with reports submitted to Township.

Ms. Highley suggested they submit 4 times per year (instead of 3 or 4 times) and confirmed that KCE is receiving those reports.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to recommend approval.

Motion by Mr. Donatelli, second by Ms. Ruhmel. Vote taken 6-0 to recommend approval.

3) INDEX #2088-26A – CEMETERY WITH OFFICE/STORAGE

3701 Rural Road

Sketch Plan

Zoning District: R-3A

Original Submission Date: 8/26/26

90-Day Expiration Date: N/A

Drew Nyman, Base Engineering, Bass Safi, owner, representing the applicant.

Chairman Bolton confirmed that the comment letters from KCE dated September 11, 2026 and Ms. Rackus dated August 31, 2026 were received.

Mr. Nyman reviewed the Sketch Plan application. There are 3 separate properties that total approximately 3.6 acres with a 70-foot-wide utility easement overhead. They would like to consolidate the 3 lots and turn them into a cemetery with an office for 2 employees and an area for equipment storage. The applicant proposed that the access drive be a 12-foot wide, one-way private drive for cemetery use only, enter off Rural Road, out on Old Country Road.

There will be a 25-foot setback from residential property lines, but the applicant will be asking for relief to allow for 10-foot setbacks off non-residential property lines. There is no proposed stormwater maintenance, and they are trying to minimize impervious coverage, current plan shows approximately 8,400 sq. ft. of impervious increase. Right now, they show a potential on-lot septic area which would serve the small office area.

Mr. Terry asked about graveside ceremonies and parking. Mr. Safi stated the intent was for parking to be on the private road on the cemetery grounds, which could accommodate about 40-50 cars.

Ms. Highley asked if there were internal roads proposed within the cemetery, other than the main road through. Mr. Safi said it would only be the one road in and out, and then 'visitors' would park on the side of that road. Ms. Highley also inquired as to the type of headstones (flat or raised), because of concerns with access when excavation is necessary. Mr. Safi said that would be up to the decedent's family to decide the type of headstone and the excavator would be a 'mini excavator' and should be able to access the site, since there is 9 feet between gravesites. He also confirmed there would be mandatory concrete vaults.

Ms. Rackus commented about the on-lot septic system and informed them that if they are not

connecting to public sewer, that relief would have to come from the Board of Commissioners, and not the Planning Commission.

Mr. Geissinger inquired if they contacted the sewer authority yet re: using a septic system. Mr. Nyman said that would happen as plans progress.

Mr. Zelena expressed concerns with only having one road, in the event that there would be a funeral when there are also people visiting a gravesite and the congestion that would incur. Mr. Safi stated they could widen the road if that would be preferable.

Mr. Bolton asked if the road would be gated when not in use. Mr. Safi stated it would be gated and open 9 am to 6 pm for those wanting to visit gravesite and closed at night. There is still the potential for people to use the road during hours of operation.

Ms. Ruhmel said she would need to see interior roads, based on the number of potential burial sites. Mr. Nyman confirmed that at maximum, there would be 3,296 gravesites. Ms. Ruhmel also inquired if the entire site would be fenced, which Mr. Safi said is not proposed at this time. Ms. Ruhmel is concerned with visitors walking long distances over uneven ground to visit a grave site, as well as people parking along Rural Road, if there is no fence to prevent that. Mr. Safi stated there would be a golf cart there during business hours and a staff member available to drive them to a grave site if necessary. As Mr. Safi explained some other features planned for the site (e.g. walkways, landscaping, etc.), Ms. Ruhmel stated those details need to be included in the plan.

Mr. Geissinger suggested they might look at entering and exiting off Rural Road, with an internal cul-de-sac for turnaround.

Mr. Donatelli asked how many parking spaces there will be for the office. Mr. Safi stated there would be 4 with 1 handicap space.

The following residents commented on the proposed project:

Carl Brocius – 3923 Old Country Road
Susan Kline – 3912 Old Country Road
Vic Lapadula – 3708 Rural Road
Mary Links – 3913 Old Country Road
Shanique Maragh – 3915 Old Country Road
Reginald Thomas – 3910 Old Country Road
Chris Moyer – 3919 Old Country Road
Barbara Miller – 3909 Old Country Road

4) INDEX #2089-26A – ALLENTOWN CENTRAL CATHOLIC H.S. ATHLETIC FACILITY

4249 Reliance Street
Land Development
Zoning District: R-1
Original Submission Date: 8/26/26
90-Day Expiration Date: 12/16/26

Patrick Boyle, ACCHS & Chris Williams, Barry Issett & Assoc., representing the applicant.

Chairman Bolton confirmed that the comment letters from KCE dated September 11, 2026 Ms. Rackus dated September 2, 2026 were received.

Mr. Boyle reviewed the proposal for athletic fields with a field house on Ruchsville Road with entrance from Bridge Street. It will not be a football field, but will be for lacrosse, soccer and track teams. There will be a synthetic track with a grass practice field.

Mr. Williams said there will also be tennis courts, a total of 229 parking spaces and 10 bus spaces. Stormwater management will be handled with an underground basin with spray irrigation fields around the perimeter of the property. They will work with the engineers to comply with comment letters, and they are also requesting a deferral curb & sidewalk.

Mr. Terry mentioned the concern about how traffic will be handled. There was a suggestion to move the driveway that's further north, to the south.

Ms. Highley mentioned her concern with stormwater running towards Coplay Creek, near the IRT. She suggested they look at something to slow down the velocity of water output. She has no problem with the waiver request for a permeable liner. She confirmed that they submitted to LVPC and will submit to LCCD next week. She questioned if there would be drainage behind the retaining walls. Mr. Williams stated that will be addressed when they get to the detailed design process.

Ms. Rackus asked if they were proposing sanitary sewer connection, to which they replied affirmatively.

Mr. Donatelli expressed his concerns with parking and inquired about possible tournament use. Mr. Boyle said it would mostly be used for soccer and lacrosse, which would allow for plenty of parking for attendees. Mr. Donatelli then questioned the need for 10 bus parking spaces. They stated that just worked out design-wise for the parking lot, as it would not have been enough room for another row of car parking.

Mr. Falkenstein questioned if the field would be locked down when not in use by the school to prevent 'unauthorized' use of the track.

The following residents commented on the proposed project:

Don Tillson – 4221 Cypress Lane
Beverly Jones – 4215 Mimosa Lane
Laurie Stettler – 4247 Cypress Lane
Don Brensinger – 4249 Cypress Lane
Cathy Sweeney – 4246 Cypress Lane
Carla Smith – 4203 Mimosa Lane
Timothy Schneider – 4225 Mimosa Lane
Aubrey Trower – 4226 Mimosa Lane
Rockie Scarl – 4744 Main Street
Todd Simon – 4207 Mimosa Lane
Maritza Melendez – 4213 Mimosa Lane

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to table.

Motion by Ms. Ruhmel, second by Mr. Zelena. Vote taken 6-0 to table.

Applicant is requesting a sidewalk deferral.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to recommend approval of curbing and sidewalk deferral request.

Motion by Mr. Zelena, second by Ms. Ruhmel. Vote taken 6-0 to recommend.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

INDEX #2082-26A – BILL #19-2026 – DATA CENTER ZONING ORDINANCE

Chairman Bolton read the disclaimer re: the Ordinance's intent to regulate Data Centers in the Township., and to date, no Data Center applications have been submitted or are pending in Whitehall Township.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to recommend approval of Bill #19-2026.

Motion by Mr. Falkenstein, second by Mr. Zelena. Vote taken 6-0 to recommend approval.

5) OTHER:

Approval of August 2026 Meeting Minutes. Motion by Mr. Donatelli, minutes approved.

D) ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:05 p.m.