Keene Township Planning Commision

Minutes from Meeting dated August 26, 2026.

Briggs called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present - Denny Briggs, Cori Wilber, Matt Stahlin, Nate Wolff, Nancy Solomon

Recognition of Visitors: Five members of the community were present. Zoning Administrator was absent due to illness.

Approval or Changes to the Agenda: Wolff motioned to approve the agenda as written. Motion seconded by Stahlin.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: Briggs mentioned the omission of information regarding Melton's private road and asked to have them amended. Minutes will be corrected to include that the proper approvals were not in place prior to the start of construction which is a violation. Wilber motioned to approve the minutes with the correction requested. Motion seconded by Wolff. All in favor. Motion approved.

Report from Zoning Administrator: No report available as ZA was absent due to illness.

Public Comment - Topics Not on Agenda: It was mentioned that policies should be in place for flock cameras. It was also mentioned that Easton Township is considering windmills.

Old Business:

1. Private Rd Application H Melton
    a. In a previous conversation, Zoning Administrator, Mercer Jr, indicated that all appears to be in order. Melton mentioned that she still needs a letter from the Drain Commissioner although he has been working closely with her engineer and has revised drawings. Melton has approvals from the Road Department, lot split approvals from previous ZA, Vandersloot, and current ZA Mercer Jr, survey legal descriptions and a road maintenance agreement. The escrow account has about $500 remaining after paying the township engineer and legal fees. A discrepancy in application fees was mentioned. Melton paid for a 5 lot split but now there are 7 lots. It is uncertain if additional monies are owed.
    b. Melton mentioned the "to do list" and suggested changing the order of tasks involved.
    c. Wilber mentioned sending notification to surrounding property owners.
    d. The property's zoning was debated between Rural Residential and Agriculture Residential. There was discussion about the number of large animals allowed in these areas. It was decided to keep the zoning as Rural Residential but suggested reviewing and possibly changing the definition in the ordinance.

e. Motion made by Stahlin to send the special use application for the private road, Lone Pine Circle, to a public hearing. Motion seconded by Wilber. Motion passed 4-0 with one abstention.
f. Motion made by Wolff to hold the Public Hearing on September 16, 2026. Motion seconded by Stahlin. Motion passed 4-0 with one abstention.

2. Ordinance Amendments - Data Centers, Cryptocurrency Data Mining Facilities
    a. Wolff mentioned that the Township Board discussed the Data Center size and wanted to consult with the attorney to determine what they legally could defend.
    b. Supervisor Smiley reported on a MTA Webinar which classified Data Centers as industrial special land use, best managed with an overlay district. The webinar highlighted that ordinance details, not just acreage, dictate effective size.
    c. Due to this new information and a recent $715 legal bill from an inquiry, it was decided to table the work on the data center ordinance. Motion made by Stahlin to table the work on the Data Center Ordinance until after reviewing information being provided by Supervisor Smiley. Motion seconded by Wolff. All in favor. Motion passed.

New Business:

1. Master Plan Survey Tabulation
    a. The group agreed that an impartial third party is needed to tabulate the Master Plan Survey. Many options were discussed and it was decided that more quotes were needed from academic institutions, financial analysts, etc. by the next public hearing.
2. Review Future Items List
    a. Review and possibly amend the livestock restrictions in Rural Residential areas.
    b. Expand the public notification radius for hearings.
    c. Review and possibly change the order of tasks for developing a private road.

Public Comment - Any Topic:

- It was mentioned that fiber was being pulled between substations. It was understood that this is being run for communication between substations only and not for public commercial use.
- Concerns were mentioned about the safety of the newly dug ditches and the poor condition of the roads. The sinkhole on Whitesbridge was mentioned (repair has been completed).
- The new Road Department Director is scheduled to attend the next October Meeting.

Adjournment:

Stahlin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:14. Motion seconded by Wilber. All in favor. Motion approved.

Minutes documented by Nancy Solomon.