Barrett Township Supervisors
Minutes of Workshop Meeting of September 17, 2025 – 6:30 PM

A Workshop Meeting of the Barrett Township Supervisors was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at the Administrative Offices on Route 390 in Cresco, PA. The Supervisors met at 6:30 PM

Present: Pam Gardsy, Grover Cleveland, Patti O'Keefe, Kelly Slinger, Darryl Speicher, Nichole Irvin, and the public.
Guest, Deanna Schmoyer, Township Engineer (D&D Engineering)

Pam Gardsy began the Supervisors workshop with discussion on a draft of a Data Center Ordinance that was prepared by the Barrett Township Solicitor, Todd Weitzmann.

Darryl Speicher explained what a Data Center is. He described a Data Center as a bank of hard drives that stores all the information we have on our cell phones and computers. They also utilize many acres of land and require a lot of water for cooling systems. Without an ordinance for Data Centers in Barrett Township and land use requirements, a Data Center is considered a "by right" use and can therefore go anywhere there is enough space. Darryl continued by stating that the purpose of the ordinance discussion is to be prepared should an application for a Data Center come in, rather than waiting for one without the tools in place. The Data Center Ordinance will need to be reviewed by the Monroe County Planning Commission as well as the Barrett Township Planning Commission.

Deanna Schmoyer was present to discuss her recommendations with the BOS for the ordinance draft. The changes and recommendations are as follows:

- General set-back including vegetation screening increased to 250ft. from lot lines and streets
- Establishing different building setbacks for Data Centers than what's in place for the Industrial zoning district
- Environmental Impact Study (NPDES?) on conditional use hearings to reduce woodland reduction impacts and environmental destruction impacts.
    - Max number of woodlands that can be removed (or as the BOS proposes at the conditional use hearing)
    - Phase 1 Environment site assessment to investigate rare or endangered species, or already existing environmental conditions.
- Parking requirements – In the Monroe County sample ordinance, they proposed at least one parking space per 8,000 square feet of floor area designed to be accessed by employees.
- Power supply to be considered as separate land use whether the power is supplied by connecting to the power grid or by solar or nuclear power, or other types of power (wind, fossil fuel, etc. Monroe county sample)
- Wells for water consumption not to be placed within the buffer zone.
- Language about Data Centers as an accessory use on a lot with an existing use

Some other discussions were held on water usage and emergency response plans to access the facility in the event of an emergency. Both of which were covered in the ordinance draft and remained unchanged with no further recommendations at this time. Kelly Slinger pointed out Section 525-23G (17) Noise Control; Asking who the "Township professional acoustical expert" will be? It was discussed that a contracted/third party professional would need to be hired to determine sound levels.

There was no further discussion on the topic.

Pam Gardsy provided an update on changes to the revised Sign Ordinance. She stated that the Planning Commission would no longer need to review the sign ordinance due to the minor changes that were taking

place, and the importance of the Data Center Ordinance needing to be reviewed instead as well as Property Maintenance Ordinance. The proposed changes to the sign ordinance were:

- Removal of duplicate G under exempt signs (real estate)
- Adding the "supervisors' waiver" under nonconforming signs 407-15 for damaged signed and properties for sale.
- Removal of political sign regulation.

There was no further discussion on the topic.

Darryl Speicher briefly discussed the Pocono Mountain EMS building in Mount Pocono finally received a bid to have their main facility rebuilt since their current building is outdated and in need of repairs.

Public comment:

Grant Hilfiger: Expressed concern about township transparency, and asked why there was not any notice about Data Centers being discussed tonight? He suggested an agenda or notice to the public when something important such as an ordinance is going to be discussed so that residents are prepared and able to be more involved. *Darryl Speicher responded to Grant saying he understands his concern, and that we [the Township Supervisors] should [provide more notice on topic discussion at workshops]. Deanna Schmoyer continued by asking Grant if he had any of his own ideas on Data Centers.*

Eli Berkowitz: Does Monroe County have any mines that used to be active that are not anymore? There is a Data Center called Iron Mountain in Pennsylvania that's in an underground mine. *Darryl Speicher stated that it was not in the plan for Barrett Township.*

Mary Greenan: Asking if the Township can limit the maximum size of the proposed space a Data Center could develop in. (example: You can't develop over 100 or 200, etc. acres) *Deanna Schmoyer advised that this was a legal question and that she and/or the BOS would need to ask the Township Solicitor. Darryl Speicher stated that the Township can restrict where a Data Center used is an approved or conditionally approved zoning use. He also stated that the Township was advised that they cannot place so many restrictions on a Data Center that they cannot build one at all.*

Sean Anlauf: Asking the difference between a buffer and a set-back for Data Centers.

Deanna Schmoyer explained that a setback refers to a building set-back that tells you where you can build your structure, and that a buffer is an amenity associated with that development.

There was further discussion on buffer vs. setbacks and if variances could be applied to decrease a buffer or a setback.

Grant Hilfiger: Is this going to be permitted use or conditional use in the Industrial zoning district? *The BOS all stated that it would be a conditional use.*

Jeff Price: What is the reason for a buffer?

Deanna Schmoyer explained that the point of a buffer helps impede any noise and it will help any glare from lights or sights from the facility.

Mary Greenan: Do you have an idea of available area within Barrett Township that they are possibly looking at? *The BOS shared that there are no applications at this time, but they have identified some of the larger parcels in the Industrial zoning district where the acreage is over 5.*

Mary Greenen: Do you [the board of supervisors] have an idea or have you discussed when you think this is going to be voted on or adopted? *The BOS generally responded that this ordinance would be completed and adopted before the end of the year.*

Resident (name not heard): For those of us who care about 5G towers for storage for data for how internet usage might impact out air quality, is there any way to do anything about it? It's very close to our house. *Deanna Schmoyer explained that the conditional use hearing that an applicant will need to apply for when applying for the permit for a data center, the BOS can apply other conditions to the application other than the restrictions that are already in place. For example, if the buffer or setback is 250ft., the BOS can tell the applicant at the hearing that they need to provide a 300 ft. buffer or setback. The public is also permitted to join the conditional use hearings to voice their concerns as well.*

Respectfully submitted,

Nichole Irvin
Zoning Officer/Recording Secretary