

TO: Plainfield Township, Northampton County Board of Supervisors

FROM: John Trant, AICP CZO ASLA Esq.
President & CEO, Strategic Solutions LLC

RE: 910 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Pen Argyl, PA 18072, Plainfield Township
Proposed expansion of the existing Grand Central Sanitary Landfill

DATE: July 17, 2025

The following is a review of the application submitted to Plainfield Township by Grand Central Sanitary Landfill, with approval from property owner, Slate Spring Farms, LLC, on September 12, 2024. The application includes the following requests of the Township:

1. A request to rezone approximately 211 acres of property in Plainfield Township from the Farm and Forest (FF) Zoning District to the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (SW) Zoning District to allow for expansion of an existing sanitary landfill in the Township at the property located at 910 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Pen Argyl, PA 18702.
2. A request to amend the Township's Zoning Ordinance to allow a sanitary landfill to be a permitted use by-right in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Zoning District; the use is currently permitted as a conditional use.
3. A request to amend the zoning ordinance to exempt properties within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District from the Steep Slope Requirements of the ordinance.

In response to the requests, the Township drafted and is considering the following ordinance amendments:

1. Zoning Map Amendment to rezone 212 acres from the Farm and Forest Zoning District to the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Zoning District.
2. Zoning Text Amendment to change sanitary landfill use classification in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District from conditional use to use by right.
3. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to exempt sanitary landfills in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District from the Steep Slope Overlay ordinance regulations.

Credentials

For over 25 years, my career has been dedicated to work in the public sector, with a strong focus on land use management, community planning, economic development, and zoning. I am both a certified Community Planner through the American Institute of Certified Planners and a licensed attorney with a law degree from Duquesne University. My academic background also includes undergraduate degrees in Landscape Architecture and Geography from Penn State University. In addition, I am a Certified Zoning Officer through the Pennsylvania Association of Zoning Officials.

Throughout my career, I have served in various leadership roles—manager, assistant manager, and administrator—for cities, townships, and boroughs. I’ve also worked as a strategic planning officer, community planner, consulting planner, and zoning officer. I’ve authored numerous zoning ordinances and amendments and serve as an instructor for the Pennsylvania Association of Zoning Officials’ Zoning Academy, as well as for planning and zoning courses offered statewide to elected officials, planning commissioners, and zoning hearing board members. I lead training programs across Pennsylvania for professional planners, zoning officers, commissioners, and elected officials on a broad range of zoning, development, and land use topics.

My experience brings deep expertise in interpreting and applying the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, drafting and enforcing land use regulations, and guiding communities through future-oriented planning initiatives. I am the President, CEO, and founder of Strategic Solutions LLC—a ten-person public sector consulting firm established in 2009.
(Resume’ attached as **EXHIBIT A**)

Summary

On September 12, 2024, Grand Central Sanitary Landfill, a waste management company located at 910 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Pen Argyl, PA 18072, submitted a request to rezone approximately 211 acres of property in Plainfield Township. The property is bounded by Pen Argyl Road to the west, Bocce Club Road and Pen Argyl Borough to the north, an electric line easement to the east, and Delabole Road to the south.

The property is currently zoned Farm and Forest (FF) Zoning District and the request is to rezone the property to the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (SW) Zoning District to allow the construction of a sanitary landfill, a permitted conditional use in that district. Of the total area proposed for rezoning, approximately 81 acres would be designated for future landfill disposal activity, with the remainder serving as an ancillary use, open space buffer, or environmental control areas required for the protection of land, air, and water in modern landfills.

In addition to the rezoning request, the applicant submitted a request to amend the zoning ordinance to allow a sanitary landfill to be a permitted use by right. The use is currently a permitted conditional use in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District. Finally, the applicant also requested to amend the zoning ordinance to exempt properties within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District from the Steep Slope requirements of the ordinance.

Strategic Solutions LLC reviewed the following documents provided by the Township.

- Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Comprehensive Planning Committee Memo (November 22, 2024) – **EXHIBIT B**
- Grand Central Station Sanitary Landfill Expansion Application (December 5, 2024)
-Cover letter, Summary & Application
-Impact Fee Application
- Pen Argyle – Plainfield – Wind Gap Regional Comprehensive Plan (September 2004)
- Plainfield Township Planning Commission Recommendation (April 4, 2025) – **EXHIBIT C**
- Rezoning Request Cover Letter and Application – Proposed zoning amendments by the Grand Central Sanitary Landfill and Slate Spring Farms, LLC (September 12, 2024)
- Zoning Map Amendment – Rezoning of parcels from Farm and Forest to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (June 27, 2025) **EXHIBIT D**
- Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Use Classification in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (June 27, 2025) **EXHIBIT D**
- Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Steep Slope Overlay Exemption for Sanitary Landfills (June 27, 2025) **EXHIBIT D**

Property Details

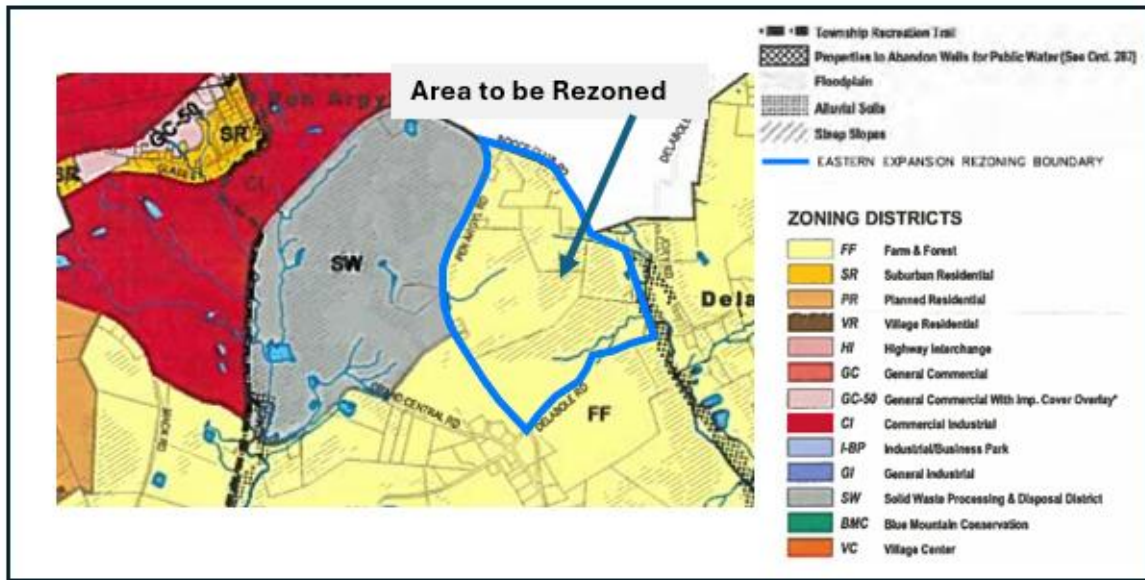
The subject property is located east of the existing landfill operation in the Township, across Pen Argyl Road. The current landfill property at 1963 Pen Argyl Road is an existing landfill operation, which is located entirely within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District and currently accommodates solid waste disposal and related facilities under both Township and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) approvals. The rezoning request would enable a contiguous expansion of the existing landfill, not the development of a new facility.

The proposed expansion area includes parcels in the Farm and Forest Zoning District that are currently vacant, agricultural, or are low-density residential which are often evaluated for landfill expansion due to their existing land use characteristics, which may present fewer immediate conflicts with densely developed or heavily populated areas. The expansion would continue to utilize existing access routes and operation infrastructure, including haul roads, entrances, and stormwater controls. Rezoning the property to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District would allow the expanded disposal area to be regulated under the same zoning, permitting, and conditional use provisions that apply to the existing operation.

Figure 1: Subject Property Location



Figure 2: Subject Property Zoning



The following parcels are requested to be rezoned from Farm and Forest District to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District:

	Parcel Number	Acreage	Owner	Current Zoning District
1	E08-13-001	1.5	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
2	E08-13-002	9.95	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
3	E08-13-003	0.39	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
4	E08-13-004	2.008	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
5	E08-13-005	5.4	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
6	E08-13-006	0.7	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
7	E08-13-007	16.0	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
8	E08-13-008	0.7	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
9	E08-13-010	62.59	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
10	E08-13-011	0.35	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
11	E08-13-012	0.35	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
12	E08-13-013	0.35	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
13	E08-13-014	72.48	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
14	E08-13-014A	19.55	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
15	E08-13-015	0.69	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
16	E08-13-016	17.0	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
17	E08-13-016A	1.35	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
18	E08-13-017	1.0	Slate Spring Farms LLC	Farm & Forest
	Total:	212.358		

Pertinent Sections of Plainfield Township's Zoning Ordinance

Section 27-305 Farm and Forest (FF) Zoning District

"The purpose of a Farm and Forest District is to encourage the continuation of farming, a rural-farm setting, forested areas, limited development, and an attractive rural residential living environment for single-family homes on relatively large lots. To encourage the retention of tracts in sizes sufficiently large for efficient agriculture. To control the numbers and locations of homes within agricultural areas to minimize conflicts with agriculture. To implement the authority established under §§ 603(b)(5), 604(3) and 605(2) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, 53 P.S. §§ 10603(b)(5), 10604(3), 10605(2). To provide for low intensity development in areas with important agricultural, historic, scenic, environmental and water resources. To provide a certain amount of flexibility in lot layout through the conservation development option so that development can be clustered on the most suitable portions of a tract of land, while still avoiding overly intense development."

The Farm and Forest zoning district is intended to protect rural landscapes, farmland, and sensitive natural features such as steep slopes, woodlands, and groundwater recharge areas. Additionally, the district limits intensity of development and preserves open space and ecological integrity. This district reflects the Township's long-standing commitment to sustainable land management, rural character preservation, and groundwater protection, while allowing agricultural operations, forestry, conservation uses, and very low-density residential development. The proposed expansion may increase the risk to groundwater quality, erosion control, stormwater runoff, and overall ecological balance. Additionally, the landfill expansion could be visually and operationally incompatible with the low-impact, rural character intended for the Farm and Forest District.

Section 27-319 Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (SW) District

"The SW District offers appropriate locations for solid waste processing and disposal as a needed public service while protecting other uses and the environment in the surrounding area, the township, and neighboring municipalities. The District also provides for a safe and orderly transition of uses after the closure of solid waste processing and disposal uses."

This regulation establishes the Solid Waste Process and Disposal District precisely to accommodate essential solid waste facilities, while safeguarding adjacent land uses, environmental quality, and planning for post-closure reuse. The proposed landfill expansion directly implements this intent by locating the activity in a pre-delineated Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District, subject to strict conditional use controls, and in an area of the Township designated for public utility and industrial service uses. Currently, no other land within the Township is zoned for solid waste disposal, making this area feasible for future disposal expansion in accordance with the Northampton County Solid Waste Management Plan.

Section 27-320 – Conditional Use Requirements

Per the Township's zoning ordinance, the proposed use, a Solid Waste Facility, is a Conditional Use in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District, meaning it is a permitted use in that district, but must meet certain conditions. The applicant's submission fully addresses the requirements of Section 27-320 for a Conditional Use in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District, including conformity with the Township's zoning intent, protective setbacks and buffers,

phased development, environmental documentation and permitting compliance (PADEP requires monitoring for solid waste, groundwater, and leachate), infrastructure impact mitigation, and security and nuisance-control measures. Below are existing conditions within the zoning ordinance and how the applicant will comply with those conditions:

- Conformance with Zoning Intent & Comprehensive Plan – The existing landfill lies within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District, designated for solid waste use. The proposal would expand the existing land use.
- Adequate Setbacks/Buffers – Active disposal is proposed to be over 300 feet from homes, with a 100-foot vegetated buffer.
- Environmental Compliance – The applicant proposed to maintain all PADEP solid waste permits, provide annual well-testing, leachate/groundwater monitoring, and use engineered liners/gas control systems.
- Traffic and Infrastructure Impacts – No new public road access; use of existing internal haul roads, with a truck-turn lane and paved entrance to prevent stacking.
- Public Safety, Security & Nuisance Control – Operation includes an 8-foot secure perimeter fence, downward screened lighting, odor-mitigation strategies, and proposed third-party monitoring.
- Phasing, Topography & Environmental Design – The applicant has submitted a detailed phasing plan, topographic cross-sections, stormwater controls, and post-closure contours.

Section 27-503 Steep Slope Overlay District

Steep slopes are often tied to sensitive natural features like groundwater recharge zones, woodlands and wetlands. The ordinance exists to prevent soil erosion, sediment runoff, and degradation of water quality – all common risks associated with landfill development as they involve large-scale grading and excavation.

Solid Waste Disposal is permitted by a special exception in Class B slope areas of 15 percent and up to 25 percent but prohibited in Class A areas of 25 percent or greater. The parcels that are requested to be rezoned show both Class A and Class B slopes to be impacted. The ordinance expressly states that all development within the Steep Slope Overlay District must conform to both the Township requirements and all applicable federal and state laws. The only exemption pertains to road improvements undertaken by or approved by the Township or PennDOT. As such, any proposed expansion of landfill operations that involves disturbance of slopes equal to or greater than 15 percent and exceeds the minimum disturbance thresholds (1,000 square feet or more) must comply with the Township's steep slope regulations. The applicant has submitted a request that would exempt landfills from the Steep Slope ordinance section stating the landfill is regulated by DEP standards.

Relevant Comprehensive Plan and Waste Management Plan

In Pennsylvania, the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) gives both the authority and requirement for townships to enact comprehensive plans and to update those plans at least once every 10 years. A comprehensive plan is a critical guiding document in any rezoning decision for a township. It outlines the community's long-term vision for land use, growth, and development, providing a policy foundation to ensure zoning changes align with broader goals for housing, infrastructure, economic development, and environmental protection. Pennsylvania law requires

zoning ordinances to be generally consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan, making it an essential tool for justifying and defending rezoning decisions in both planning and legal contexts. At the same time, while it serves as a key reference in decision-making, the comprehensive plan is not a regulatory ordinance.

Pen Argyl – Plainfield – Wind Gap Regional Comprehensive Plan (2004)

The Township’s Regional Comprehensive Plan provides guidance related to land use, housing, economic development, natural resource protection, and infrastructure and services, along with implementation tools related to the goals of the plan. The future land use map within the plan identifies the subject property as an Agricultural Preservation area. This designation represents approximately one-half of the township’s land area and is characterized by its rural, farm setting, forested areas, limited development, and lack of public water and sewer. Uses within this district should minimize conflicts with farming operations, with an emphasis on new homes.

Related to solid waste disposal, the plan recognizes this as critical infrastructure in alignment with the Northampton County Municipal Waste Plan. Further, while the plan prioritizes agricultural, natural, and open space conservation broadly, it specifically identifies the Route 512 corridor – including the existing Grand Central Landfill site – as an appropriate location for industrial and utility uses, even noting potential for “small-scale industrial development around the margins of the landfill operation.”

Northampton County Municipal Solid Waste Management Plan (2020)

The Municipal Waste Management Plan for Northampton County was undertaken in response to the PADEP’s mandate that County Municipal Waste Management Plans be updated every 10 years. The primary goals of the plan were to ensure adequate municipal waste disposal capacity in Northampton County for the next 10 years, support progress toward the state’s 35 percent recycling goal, and enhance recycling opportunities for residents and businesses. As part of the planning effort, the county is required to secure sufficient capacity for the disposal of municipal waste within the county for at least a 10-year period. According to the plan, Northampton County expected to enter into agreements with several providers that would support sufficient waste disposal over 10 years. The plan noted 21 designated disposal facilities and transfer stations including Grand Central Landfill. The plan also noted that during the years 2014 to 2018, Grand Central Sanitary was the top disposal facility by tonnage for the county (528,665.2 tons).

Review of Planning Commission Recommendation to Board of Supervisors

The following is a summary of relevant Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings where the proposed landfill expansion was discussed, including the public input received throughout the review process.

- September 26, 2024 – The Planning Commission reviewed the submitted zoning map amendment request by Waste Management.
- October 23, 2024 – The Board of Supervisors voted to forward the rezoning request to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation.
- January 29, 2025 – The Planning Commission meeting was held to gather public input.
- March 17, 2025 – The Planning Commission voted 4-1 to recommend denial of the rezoning request based on consistency with the Township’s Comprehensive Plan and the substantial public opposition received.

- April 24, 2025 – The Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 to hire a consultant to further evaluate the rezoning request.
- June 11, 2025 – At the Board of Supervisors meeting, several residents provided public comment that were a mix of support and opposition. Supporters emphasized potential financial benefits to the Township, including tax relief and long-term operation needs. Opponents raised concerns regarding odor, air, and water quality, truck traffic, erosion, property values, and the Township’s role in hosting regional waste infrastructure.

The Grand Central Sanitary Landfill expansion has generated significant public input based on review of the documents provided and publicly available meeting information. Resident feedback suggests concern regarding environmental impacts and also potential financial and service benefits to the Township and residents.

Review of Township Proposed Amendments to the Zoning Code

Zoning Map Amendment

Rezoning of 212 Acres from Farm and Forest (FF) to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal

The proposed ordinance seeks to amend the Plainfield Township Zoning Map by rezoning approximately 212 acres of land, consisting of 18 parcels currently zoned Farm and Forest (FF), to Solid Waste processing and Disposal (SW) District. The purpose of the rezoning is to allow uses permitted within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District, which includes solid waste processing and disposal facilities. The rezoning makes practical sense for a landfill expansion in terms of land area, zoning compatibility, and ownership consolidation. However, broader considerations such as alignment with the Townships Comprehensive Plan, environmental impacts, infrastructure capacity, and public sentiment must also be weighed.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Proposed Change to Sanitary Landfill Use Classification in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District.

The proposed ordinance amendment seeks to change sanitary landfill uses from conditional uses to permitted-by-right uses within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District. Eliminating the conditional use process removes essential public oversight and local control of a complex and potentially impactful land use. Landfills have significant environmental, traffic, and community impacts that require case-by-case review, public hearings, and the ability for the Township to impose site-specific conditions where appropriate. Making landfills a use by-right would prevent the Township from having the ability to conduct a thorough review and curtail the possibility of tailoring approvals based on local conditions.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Steep Slope Overlay Exemption for Sanitary Landfills in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District.

The proposed ordinance amendment seeks to exempt the Steep Slope Overlay regulations from sanitary landfill uses in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District. It is recommended that development within areas subject to Steep Slope Overlay, when located in the Solid Waste Disposal District, be regulated as a conditional use rather than a complete exemption. This approach would allow the Township to evaluate proposed activities on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that environmental impacts are adequately addressed and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

Recommendation

The sanitary landfill land use should be permitted in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Zoning District as a conditional use and the rezoning, which is a legislative decision by the Township Supervisors, could be supported by the following factors:

Operational Lifespan and Regional Need

Based on current fill rates, Grand Central Sanitary Landfill is approaching the final years of its permitted operation lifespan. Without an approved expansion, the facility will be required to begin closure planning and capping procedures in the near term, which would permanently reduce solid waste disposal capacity in the Lehigh Valley and surrounding regions. At the same time, several surrounding landfills, including:

- Chrin Brothers Sanitary Landfill – 25 miles south of Pen Argyl
- Keystone Sanitary in Dunmore – 25 miles north near Scranton

have reached or are nearing capacity, and the PADEP Municipal Waste Landfills and Resource Recovery Facilities website data shows an ongoing regional need for permitted disposal space. As a permitted and well-regulated facility, Grand Central is uniquely positioned to help meet this demand in a manner that limits new environmental or land use disruption, given its existing infrastructure and contiguous site availability.

Continuation of an Existing Use

The proposal constitutes an expansion of an established, legally operating use, not the introduction of a new one. The landfill has been in continuous operation within the Township under state and local oversight and is subject to an extensive regulatory framework, including compliance with all provisions of the Township Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning Limitations and Site Appropriateness

The Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District is the only district in the Township where landfill use is permitted, and no other areas of the Township are zoned to accommodate such use. The expansion area directly adjoins the existing facility, making it the most viable and least-impactful option for accommodation of additional area in the Township for this land use.

Existing Roadway Access and Capacity

The proposal will utilize existing internal road infrastructure, including truck entrances and haul routes, thereby avoiding the creation of new access points or road disruptions. The expansion will not substantially alter current traffic patterns on public roads.

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Use

The proposal area is located in a low-density portion of the Township, primarily surrounded by agricultural and wooded lands, lessening the potential impacts of the proposed expansion on the surrounding land uses. With appropriate buffering and operational safeguards, the landfill remains compatible with the surrounding character and does not encroach on dense residential neighborhoods or community facilities. However, the proposed expansion presents several potential impacts on adjacent property owners that merit careful consideration. These potential impacts include:

- Visual and Aesthetic Impacts

- Odor and Air Quality
- Noise and Traffic
- Groundwater and Surface Water Concerns

Regulatory Oversight and Phased Management

Any expansion would remain subject to the full PADEP permitting, and all conditions of the Plainfield Township zoning ordinance and landfill-specific standards would apply. These include the submittal of a phasing plan, performance monitoring, groundwater protections, and provisions for municipal inspection and enforcement.

Recommendation Conditions of Approval

Under the PA Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), *Section 913.2(53 P.S. 10913.2)*, a conditional use – such as a landfill in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District – may be approved by the Board of Supervisors when authorized by the zoning ordinance and found to meet applicable use-specific and general criteria. The MPC provides that such uses must be reviewed at a public hearing within 60 days of application filing and may be subject to reasonable conditions enumerated in the zoning ordinance and additional reasonable conditions may be attached to an approval by the Township Board of Supervisors.

To help ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses and to address potential impacts of the proposed land use, it is recommended that the following conditions be incorporated into the conditional use section of the Township's Zoning Ordinance or considered as additional reasonable conditions attached to a conditional use approval:

1. Increased setback from residential dwellings: No active disposal cell shall be located within 500 feet of any existing residence, regardless of zoning district. This would improve buffer and air quality protection beyond the baseline 300ft minimum.
2. Tree buffering and visual screening: A continuous 100ft wide vegetated buffer of evergreen trees and or elevated berms shall be maintained around all public-facing property lines. This limits impact and improves visual compatibility for nearby roads and homes.
3. Restricted Operating Hours: Landfill operations (including truck movements) shall only occur between 7:00am and 6:00pm, Monday through Saturday; closed Sundays and Federal holidays. This further limits disruption to daily residential life, school traffic and noise.
4. Wheel Wash System & Litter: Trucks exiting the site must pass through a wheel-wash system, and a litter patrol plan must be submitted and annually updated. This further prevents mud, dust, and debris on township roads.
5. Road Maintenance & Repair Bond: The applicant shall post a road-damage escrow or surety bond with the Township for any township roads used access. This ensures the owner, not the taxpayers, funds long-term road wear.

6. Local Emergency Access & Coordination: The Applicant shall provide a detailed emergency response plan to the Township and emergency services. This proactively involves first responders and ensures the township is prepared for fire, gas or leachate events.
7. Traffic Study & Reassessment Clause: A traffic impact study must be submitted and updated every 5 years, with recommendations for signalization, signage, or road improvements reviewed by the Engineer. This ensures long-term road use remains compatible with township safety as volumes change.
8. Independent Environmental Inspector: The Township may appoint or retain a third-party DEP certified environmental inspector (at the landfill operator's expense) to conduct random inspections and report directly to the Board of Supervisors. This adds local enforcement and protects residents with real-time accountability. This condition aligns with Section 27-317 of the current zoning code.

Conclusion

Based on a detailed review of the applicant's request, the Plainfield Township Zoning Ordinance, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, and the Township's Regional Comprehensive Plan, the proposed expansion of the Grand Central Sanitary Landfills appears to be a reasonable and contextually appropriate extension of the existing permitted use within the Township. The site's adjacency to the current landfill operation, the lack of other suitably zoned land, and the continued regional need for waste disposal infrastructure provide a rational basis for considering the rezoning approval.

The nature of landfill operations requires a deliberate and protective approach, particularly with respect to environmental and resident compatibility and safety. Therefore, the sanitary landfill land use should continue to be permitted in the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Zoning District as a conditional use to ensure that the expansion is developed and operated in a way that maintains the integrity of the surrounding area and reasonably mitigates potential impacts.

With the incorporation of the recommended conditional use conditions detailed in this memorandum – including enhanced buffers, environmental monitoring, traffic mitigation, and operation safeguards – the Township can provide for regional infrastructure needs while balancing the health, safety and quality of life of its residents. Consideration and approval of the rezoning and subsequent conditional use application is therefore recommended only with the adoption of these additional protective measures and based on the facts and information provided by the Township for review.



John has over 25 years of strategic and community planning, economic development, meeting facilitation, zoning, land use planning, and local government administration and management experience. His education and experience as a community planner, lawyer, landscape architect, and local government executive benefits a variety of public- and private-sector clients.

John Trant AICP, Esq., ASLA, CZO

CONTACT	PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
524 Sandrae Drive Pittsburgh, PA 15243 412-857-2151 john@strategic- solutionsllc.com	<div> <p>President & CEO <i>2009 - present</i> Strategic Solutions LLC Advises clients on strategic planning, local government administration and management, land use management, zoning, and economic development issues.</p> </div> <div> <p>Regional Manager for Municipal Services <i>2014</i> HRG, Inc. Managed municipal services in firm's Western PA region</p> </div> <div> <p>Contract Attorney <i>2014</i> Lynch Weis LLC and Cafardi, Ferguson, Wyrick, Weis and Stanger LLC Municipal and land use law.</p> </div> <div> <p>Chief Strategy Officer and Assistant Township Manager <i>2007 - 2014</i> Cranberry Township, Butler County Advised elected officials on strategic policy issues and economic development and managed legal matters; updated the Township's land use ordinances and directed ongoing initiatives to create a business-friendly environment for local economic growth.</p> </div> <div> <p>Adjunct Professor <i>2012-2014</i> Chatham University Developed curriculum for and instructed "Community Planning and Management" in the Master of Landscape Architecture Program.</p> </div> <div> <p>Adjunct Professor <i>2009-2012</i> Slippery Rock University Developed curriculum for and instructed "Planning for Sustainable Communities" in the Master of Science in Sustainable Systems program.</p> </div> <div> <p>Associate Attorney <i>2006-2007</i> Tucker Arensberg, P.C. Practiced in municipal, school district and land use law.</p> </div> <div> <p>Community Planner <i>2004-2006</i></p> </div>

Cranberry Township

Reviewed subdivision and land development plan applications and drafted amendments to zoning and land development ordinances.

Summer Associate

2005

Tucker Arensberg, P.C.

Researched legal issues and wrote client memoranda on a variety of legal topics.

Planner/Project Manager

1999-2004

Pashek Associates, Ltd.

Managed comprehensive planning and recreation planning projects, including facilitation of stakeholder, committee and public meetings.

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, Duquesne University School of Law, 2006

B.A., Geography, The Pennsylvania State University, 1999

Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, The Pennsylvania State University, 1999

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Zoning Official

Certified Community Planner

BOARDS & AFFILIATIONS

Advisory Committee, PA State Planning Board Local Permitting Reform Study

American Planning Association, Pennsylvania Chapter

Association of Pennsylvania Municipal Management

Butler County Chamber of Commerce, Board of Directors

Greentree Borough, Allegheny County, Zoning Hearing Board Member

International City/County Management Association

Leadership Butler County

Pennsylvania Association of Zoning Officials / Certified Zoning Officer

PA State Association of Township Supervisors

Pennsylvania Bar Association

Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association

Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs

Sustainable Pittsburgh, Board of Directors

ZONING EXPERT

Brentwood Bank, Bethel Park, Allegheny County - Rezoning

Glade Run Lutheran Services, Zelienople Borough, Butler County - Rezoning

Gouwens, Indiana Township, Allegheny County, PRD

Horizon Properties, Cecil Township, Washington County - Zoning Ordinance

Maronda Homes, Cecil Township, Washington County - Rezoning

Middle Paxton Township, Dauphin County - Zoning Validity Challenge

Modwash Car Wash, West View Borough, Allegheny County - Conditional Use

Neshannock Township, Lawrence County - Curative Amendment

Nottingham Township, Washington County - Conditional Use

Sewickley Heights Borough, Allegheny County - Zoning Enforcement Appeal

Sheetz, Butler Township, Butler County - Rezoning
Shenango Township, Lawrence County – Conditional Use
Starr Farms, Allegheny Township, Westmoreland County – Curative Amendment
Wilmington Township, Lawrence County – Curative Amendment
Wrigley 19, Lancaster Township, Butler County – Curative Amendment

LECTURES AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

“Role of the Zoning Hearing Board”, PSATS, Webinar, February 20, 2025.
“Comprehensive Plans and Zoning”, PSATS, Tunkhannock PA, February 18, 2025.
“Zoning Academy”, PSATS, Exton, PA, February 12-13, 2025.
“Role of the Planning Commission”, PSATS, Webinar, February 6, 2025.
“Show Me the Money: Fees and the Municipalities Planning Code”, PSATS, Enola PA, December 11, 2024.
“Hug Your Local Code Enforcement Officer”, Housing Alliance of PA Annual Conference, Hershey PA, December 5, 2024.
“Show Me the Money: Fees and the Municipalities Planning Code”, PSATS Solicitors Association, Greentree PA, December 3, 2024.
“Zoning Hot Topics”, PSATS Solicitors Association, Greentree PA, December 3, 2024.
“Land Development A to Z and Zoning Potpourri”, PSATS Regional Forum, Canonsburg PA, October 2, 2024.
“Role of the Planning Commission”, PSATS, Glenville PA, September 19, 2024.
“Land Development A to Z and Zoning Potpourri”, PSATS Regional Forum, Williamsport PA, September 19, 2024.
“Zoning Hot Topics”, Commonwealth Building Officials Annual Conference, Farmington PA, September 12, 2024.
“Zoning Academy”, PSATS, Erie PA, August 28-29, 2024.
“Land Development A to Z and Zoning Potpourri”, PSATS Regional Forum, Erie PA, August 7, 2024.
“Show Me the Money: Fees and the Municipalities Planning Code”, PSATS, Boalsburg, PA, June 19, 2024.
“Show Me the Money: Fees and the Municipalities Planning Code”, GFOA-PA Annual Conference, Hershey, PA, May 19, 2024.
“PSATS Boot Camp for Township Officials – Land Use and Planning”, Meadville, PA, March 16, 2024.
“PSATS Boot Camp for Township Officials – Land Use and Planning”, Canonsburg, PA, January 27, 2024.
“Zoning Academy”, PSATS, Harrisburg, PA, December 5 and 6, 2023.
“Duties of a Planning Commission”, PSATS, College Township, Centre County, November 28, 2023.
“PRDs, Impact Fees, Accessories, and Financial Securities - A Deep Dive into the MPC”, American Planning Association, PA Chapter Conference, October 17, 2023.
“Duties of a Zoning Hearing Board”, PSATS, Clinton Township, Butler County, September 6, 2023.
“Duties of a Planning Commission”, PSATS, Ligonier Township, Westmoreland County, September 21, 2023.
“PSATS Zoning Academy”, Allentown, PA, June 26, 2023.
“A Deep Dive into the MPC”, PSATS/PAAZO Spring Seminar, Hershey, PA, April 23, 2023.

“Duties of a Zoning Hearing Board”, PSATS, Greene Township, Erie County, March 15, 2023.

"Zoning and Effective Communications", PSATS/PAAZO Fall Seminar, Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh, Cranberry Township, PA, November 17, 2022.

"Local Land Use Ordinances and Comprehensive Plans in Pennsylvania", HalfMoon Education Inc. Webinar – September 29, 2022.

"Zoning Hot Topics", PSATS Southwest Regional Forum, Cranberry Township, PA: September 29, 2022

"Zoning Hot Topics: Keeping You Up To Speed on Trending Land Uses", 30th Annual PHRC (Pennsylvania Housing Research Center) Conference, State College, PA: March 3, 2022.

"Compliance and Capital Solutions Through Regionalization", Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association 79th Annual Conference & Trade Show, State College, PA: August 30, 2021.

"Compliance and Capital Solutions Through Regionalization", Pennsylvania Water Environment Association, PennTec 2021 - Utility Management Technical Program, Kalahari Resort, PA: June 22, 2021.

"How Effective Communication Can Implement Community Planning", Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, Online, January 21st and 28th, 2021.

"Technical Training Session – Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development", Local Government Academy with the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, Online Series for the Cities of Johnstown and Duquesne, 2020.

"Hug Your Local Code Enforcement Officers", American Planning Association, PA Chapter Annual Conference, Reading, PA: October 21, 2019.

"Duties of the Zoning Hearing Board", Pennsylvania Training Hub with PA Department of Community and Economic Development, Various Locations, 2019.

"Springfield Township Tax Increment Financing and Economic Development", 79-80 Interstate Development Corporation Annual Meeting, Grove City Country Club, April 26, 2019.

"Zoning for Infill and Redevelopment", Pennsylvania Housing Research Center Annual Conference; March 14, 2019.

"Using Zoning Ordinances as Tools for Community Preservation and Economic Development", PCRG 2017 Community Development Summit; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; May 24, 2017.

"Zoning Hearing Board Training Workshop", Summit Township, Erie County, PA; April 20, 2016.

"Running Effective Meetings and Making Decisions", The Role of the Planning Commission in Assuring Community Vitality, Carnegie, Pennsylvania, April 13, 2016.

"Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Refresher", County Planning Directors Association of Pennsylvania Membership Meeting, State College, November 6, 2015.

"The Alphabet Soup of the PA Municipalities Planning Code: Traditional Neighborhood Development, Transfer of Development Rights, and Multi-Municipal Planning", Local Government Academy Webinar Wednesdays Series, Online, August 12, 2015.

"Land Use, Zoning, and Addressing Impacts of Shale Gas Drilling, After the PA Supreme Court Act 13 Rulings", Local Government Academy Managing Marcellus Training Series, Washington, PA, June 4, 2015.

"Tools for Successful Stormwater Management: Ordinance Enforcement and Funding Resources", Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's Water Resource Center, Various Locations, PA; November 13-19, 2014.

"Running Effective Meetings and Making Decisions", The Role of the Planning Commission in Assuring Community Vitality, Green Tree, Pennsylvania, November 6, 2014.

"A New Look at Reviewing Subdivision and Development Plans", Pennsylvania Local Government Training Partnership: Planning Series, Various Locations, Pennsylvania, October - December 2014.

"New Trends in Land Use Ordinances", Pennsylvania Municipal Law Colloquium; Pennsylvania Bar Institute, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; June 7-8, 2013.

"From Sprawling to Thriving - Cranberry 20-year growth spurt continues, but it looks a whole lot different", American Planning Association National Conference; Chicago, Illinois; April 16, 2013.

"Local Case Studies in Sustainability", Creating Sustainable Communities Conference; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; November 3, 2011.

"Current Initiatives in Sustainable Community Planning", PA Chapter of American Planning Association Annual Conference; Scranton, Pennsylvania; October 18, 2011.

"Progressive Comprehensive Planning", Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group Community Development Summit; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; 25 May 2011

"What's Hot on the Green Scene", Association for Pennsylvania Municipal Management Annual Conference; Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania; May 18, 2011.

"Bike and Pedestrian Connections Planning", Transportation Engineering and Safety Conference; State College, Pennsylvania; December 9, 2010.

"Real Estate Round Up", Urban Land Institute; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; May 5, 2010.

"Building Better Communities by Linking Land Use and Transportation Planning", Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors 2010 Annual Conference; Hershey, Pennsylvania; April 20, 2010.

"What is Possible: Energy and Municipal Operations", Sustainable Pittsburgh's Sustainable Development Academy; Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania; March 19, 2010.

"Going Green", Build Green Conference 2009; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; October 14, 2009.

"Practicing Sustainable Community Development", Sustainable Pittsburgh Training Session; Millvale, Pennsylvania; June 4, 2009.

"Cranberry Township's Sustainability Assessment", Pennsylvania Planning Association - Southwest Chapter Training Session; Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania; March 6, 2009.

"Form-Based Zoning of Land Use", Transportation Engineering and Safety Conference; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; December 11, 2008.

"Measuring Growth and Market Impacts to Build Your Comprehensive Plan", Pennsylvania Planning Association Annual Conference; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; October 13, 2008.

"Applying New Zoning Techniques", Sustainable Pittsburgh Smart Growth Conference; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; May 16, 2008.



DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

November 22, 2024

Ms. Paige Stefanelli, Manager
Plainfield Township
6292 Sullivan Trail
Nazareth, Pennsylvania 18064

**Re: Zoning Map Amendment – Rezoning to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District
Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Sanitary Landfill Regulations
Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Steep Slopes
Plainfield Township
Northampton County**

Dear Ms. Stefanelli:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings will be virtual, and we encourage your participation. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting if Commission members have any additional comments. Meeting participation details are below:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - November 19, 2024 at 12:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - November 21, 2024 at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>

The proposal, submitted by Waste Management as a private applicant, proposes to amend the Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map pertaining to sanitary landfill facilities. As the Grand Central Landfill approaches the end of its lifecycle, the Township must evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of expanding the landfill to enable continued operations.

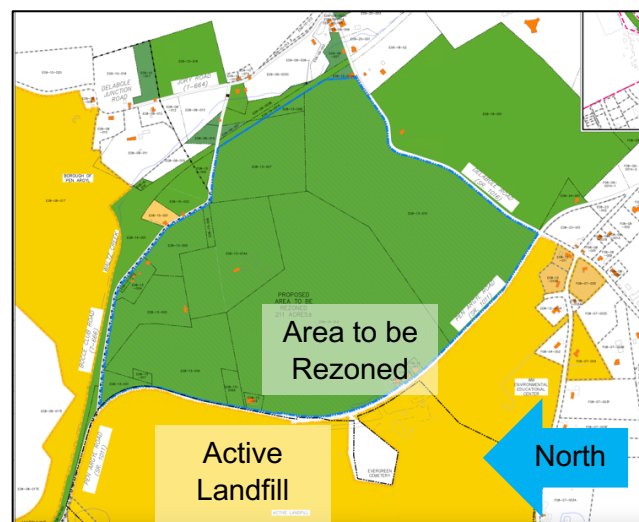
Landfills play a crucial role in the health and safety of communities by providing a designated, controlled space to safely dispose of waste that cannot be recycled or reused. They help prevent illegal dumping and manage waste in a way that protects public health and minimizes environmental impact through containment systems that prevent soil and water contamination. Having a landfill near or in the communities it serves reduces costs to haul and dispose of waste for residents, and by reducing the necessary travel distance for disposal, traffic and infrastructure impacts are reduced.

Landfills are also high intensity land uses with significant social and environmental impacts that must be cautiously scrutinized. Landfills require large tracts of land that become permanently altered, limiting the future use of the land, and while landfills are regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to minimize environmental impacts, these proposals still should involve substantial review to ensure environmentally responsible and economical solid waste disposal and recycling (of *FutureLV* Policy 3.2).

The LVPC has reviewed the proposed zoning map amendment and zoning ordinance amendments and offers the following comments:

Zoning Map Amendment

The application proposes to amend the Township's Zoning Map by rezoning 18 parcels on the east side of Pen Argyl Road from Farm and Forest Zoning District (FF) to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (SW). The area to be rezoned is bounded by Pen Argyl Road to the west, Delabole Road to the south, Bocce Club Road to the north and the rail right-of-way to the east. The total area to be rezoned is 211 acres, with a total land area of 325 acres to be acquired by Waste Management to incorporate buffering. 81 acres would be for waste disposal area, 52 acres would be used for supporting uses, and 192 acres would serve as woodland and wetland buffer areas.

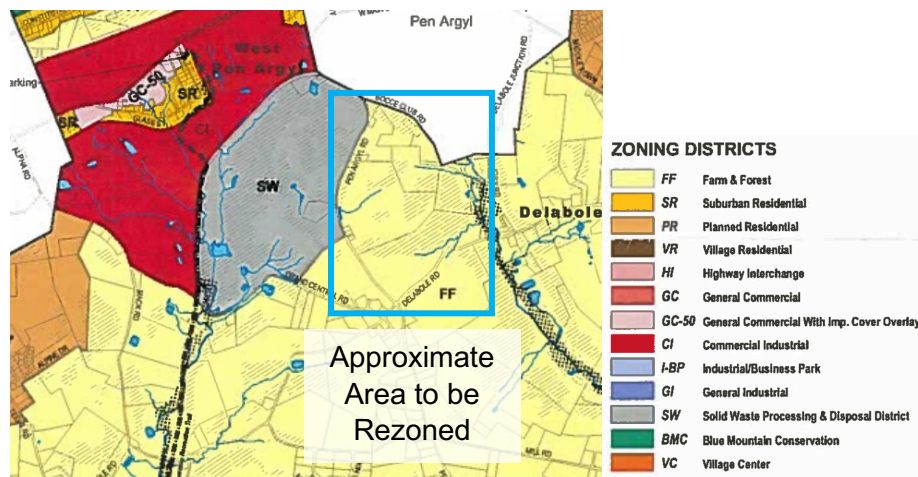


Applicant-Proposed Zoning Map Amendment

The current land uses in the area proposed to be rezoned are mostly agriculture and woodland, with an existing farmstead and a single-family structure. The area is adjacent to the existing landfill across Pen Argyl Road. Pen Argyl Borough is to the north, and exurban and agricultural areas are to the east and south. The existing landfill is currently zoned Solid Waste Processing & Disposal District. The remaining area surrounding the area proposed to be rezoned is zoned Farm & Forest District (FF).

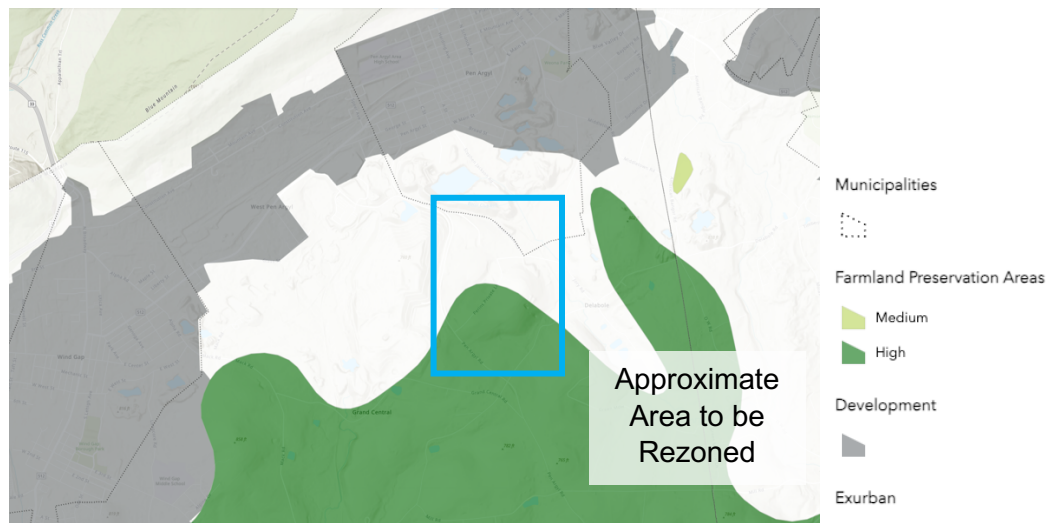


Vicinity Aerial – Google Imagery



Existing Plainfield Township Zoning

The area proposed to be rezoned to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District is in an area identified as Exurban in the General Land Use Plan of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, and a portion of the area to the south is identified for Farmland Preservation. *FutureLV* identifies Exurban areas as generally those that have few or none of the factors necessary for development and should remain in rural uses; however, the area to be rezoned is adjacent to the existing Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (SW) Zoning District, indicating capacity for the general area to accommodate the land use at the existing scale and intensity.



FutureLV General Land Use Plan

A consideration for the rezoning is appropriate protection and buffering for adjacent environmental features and nearby land uses. According to the applicant's letter, 192 acres of area adjacent to the landfill expansion site are slated to remain as wetland and wooded areas. The LVPC strongly recommends that the area adjacent to the anticipated landfill expansion site be permanently protected from future development. A land protection tool such as a conservation easement could be placed on this area and held by the Township and a conservation organization to ensure the existing wetlands and natural features are preserved in perpetuity (of *FutureLV* Policy 3.1).

Based on the context of the location, rezoning the area to accommodate continuation of landfill operations can make sense for the Township if the environmental impacts of the land use are scrutinized and mitigated through the Township's regulations.

Solid Waste Facility Requirements

The proposal includes an amendment to sections of the Township's Zoning Ordinance regulating Sanitary Landfill land uses.

The LVPC advises against changing the designation of Sanitary Landfill land uses from a Conditional Use to a Use Permitted by Right. Conditional Uses are still permitted uses, but with reasonable conditions in place to support the public health, safety and welfare. Landfills and Waste Disposal Facilities are high intensity land uses with impacts that must be carefully considered and mitigated when proposed. The review process for conditional uses can provide the Township with assurance that safeguards are in place to pose minimal adverse impacts on the public health, safety and welfare.

The 'Additional Requirements for Certain Permitted-By-Right Uses' that are proposed to be added if Sanitary Landfill is added as a Permitted-By-Right Use are already

Conditional Use requirements for the 'Sanitary Landfill – Involving the disposal of more than 100 tons of solid waste per day' land use. The Conditional Use process is a more appropriate way of regulating the land use as outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, to ensure that all potential impacts on the public health, safety and welfare are considered (of Policy 3.2) and as a best practice for regulating land use (of Policy 1.4). In general, if the requested rezoning from FF to SW District is granted, the LVPC recommends retaining the existing requirements of the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (Section 27-319.4.A) and conditional use regulations for Sanitary Landfills (Section 27-320.5.I).

Steep Slopes

The Plainfield Township Zoning Ordinance regulates development on steep slopes through the Steep Slopes Overlay Zoning District, stating that 'The Steep Slope Overlay District shall be an overlay on all zoning districts. For any lot or portion thereof lying within the Steep Slope Overlay District, the regulations of the overlay district shall take precedence over the regulations of the underlying district' (Section 27-503.3). Solid Waste Disposal is permitted by special exception in Class B slope areas of 15% up to 25% (Section 27.503.7.A(6)) but prohibited in Class A Slope areas of 25% or greater (Section 27.503.10.A(2)). The conceptual site plan shows that both slope areas will be impacted by the landfill expansion if the properties are rezoned.

The ordinance amendment proposes to add an exception for Sanitary Landfill uses, stating that 'Exception: Notwithstanding any other provision(s) of this Zoning Ordinance to the contrary, the regulations of this section 27-503 shall not apply to a sanitary landfill use within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW) because such use is appropriately regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), involving a detailed review of environmental impacts, and requiring ongoing inspections, both during and after the active life of the landfill.'

Rather than exempt Sanitary Landfill uses from all provisions of the Steep Slope Overlay District, a better regulatory approach could be to amend Section 27.503 by permitting solid waste disposal as a special exception in Class A slope areas. The Township may find that DEP requirements should not be the primary reason to exempt the land use from local steep slope regulations because they may not reflect local community concerns, goals and values. The LVPC recommends regulating land uses through special exception or conditional use processes rather than outright exemptions to ensure an efficient development process that is responsive to regional needs (of *FutureLV* Policy 1.4).

Another alternative that could be explored is to reconfigure the sanitary landfill footprint area to minimize impacts to Class A steep slope areas.

Analyzing Impacts

As part of background for the zoning application, the LVPC received numerous impact analyses prepared by the applicant, including environmental, transportation, health and economic impacts. Because the existing landfill is nearing its maximum capacity, at which point operations will cease, the rezoning will allow a continuation of existing operations. If the area is rezoned, significant adverse community impacts are unlikely due to the close proximity of the expansion area to existing operations. The most substantial impacts would be to the land itself.

Mitigation measures for impacts on natural resources present on site, including ephemeral stream, alluvial soils, wetlands, high water table and others described in Part 5 (27-501-521) must be secured and accepted by permitting agencies. The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory report included in the zoning amendment materials is from 2018. These findings are only valid for 2 years; thus these studies would need to be updated to 'minimize environmental impacts of development to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public' (of *FutureLV* Policy 3.2).

On Wednesday November 22, the LVPC received an email from Jane Mellert containing comments on the proposal and a digital copy of the **Plainfield Township Comprehensive Supplement - A Plan For Solid Waste Processing and Disposal Facilities, which was created in June 1988**. The LVPC recommends evaluating the findings of the 1988 study for historical context surrounding the landfill as the Township deliberates taking action on the proposal.

Landfills are controversial land uses because they manage waste, but even more so because they symbolize society's challenges in addressing consumption, waste production and environmental stewardship. They reflect our dependency on disposal rather than reduction, recycling and sustainable alternatives, and that dependency creates the necessity for landfills to exist, and areas where they can be accommodated are limited. The LVPC encourages the Township to evaluate the proposal through practical reasoning and data-driven conclusions, including cost-benefit and fiscal analyses for the Township and adjacent municipalities.

Municipalities, when considering ordinances and official maps, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC.

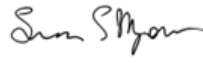
The LVPC has copied representatives of adjacent municipalities to 'coordinate land use decisions across municipal boundaries' (Policy 1.4). If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Jill Seitz

Chief Community and Regional Planner



Susan Myerov

Director of Environmental Planning

cc: Amy Kahler, Administrative Assistant/Township Secretary; Louise Firestone, Wind Gap Borough Manager; Robin Zmoda, Pen Argyl Borough Manager; Adrienne Fors, Waste Management Senior Community Relations Specialist; Dave Allen, EARTHRES Senior Project Manager

Plainfield Township Planning Commission



6292 Sullivan Trail
Nazareth, Penna. 18064

Phone 610-759-6944

April 4, 2025

Board of Supervisors

RE: Grand Central Sanitary Landfill, Inc. and Slate Spring Farms, LLC- Waste Management- Zoning Amendment Application – Rezoning Request

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors:

I am formally advising the Board of Supervisors of the following recommendations made by the Planning Commission at its Special Meeting on Monday, March 17, 2025.

1. Recommendation to Deny Rezoning of 211 Acres:

The Planning Commission voted 4-1 with Commissioner, Allen Schafer, opposing to recommend denial of the proposed rezoning of the 211-Acre Parcel. This recommendation was based on the following considerations:

- The proposal does not adequately address health concerns discussed by the Plainfield Township Planning Commission.
- The proposal does not align with the Plainfield Township Comprehensive Plan.
- The proposal would have a negative impact on traffic flow patterns in surrounding areas.
- The Financial Analysis Report conducted by Susquehanna Accounting Solutions, dated January 2025, indicates that funds will be available to the Township through 2038.
- The recommendation of the Planning Commission also reflects a large majority of residents expressing their position against granting this request.

2. Recommendation to Deny a Change in Use from Conditional Use to a Use Permitted By-Right within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW):

The Planning Commission voted 4-1 with Commissioner, Allen Schafer, opposing to recommend denial of the request to Change the Use from Conditional Use to a Use Permitted By-Right within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW).

3. Recommendation to Deny the Proposed Ordinance which would Exempt the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW) from the requirements of Steep Slopes:

The Planning Commission voted 4-1 with Commissioner, Allen Schafer, opposing to recommend denial of the proposed Ordinance which would Exempt the Solid Waste Processing

and Disposal District (SW) from the requirements of Steep Slopes within the Plainfield Township Ordinance.

These recommendations are hereby submitted for the Board of Supervisor's consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Levits". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "P" and "L".

Paul Levits
Chairman
Plainfield Township

LAW OFFICES
DAVID M. BACKENSTOE
148 MAIN STREET
HELLERTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18055

TELEPHONE: 610-838-2255
dbackenstoelaw@outlook.com

FAX: 610-838-2244

June 27, 2025

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
615 Waterfront Drive
Suite 201
Allentown, PA 18102

Re: Zoning Map Amendment Ordinance – Farm and Forest to Solid Waste
Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Sanitary Landfill Regulations – Conditional Use to
Permitted Use
Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Steep Slopes Exemption
Plainfield Township
Our File: PT 14-119

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing to you in my capacity as Solicitor to the Township of Plainfield.
Enclosed please find three (3) proposed Ordinances. I enclose two (2) proposed Amendments to
Plainfield Township's Zoning Ordinance and a proposed Amendment to the Zoning Map.

These three (3) proposed Ordinances are pending review by the Board of Supervisors.
Although you previously issued a comprehensive memorandum dated November 22, 2024
regarding these three (3) Ordinances, the Board asked that I resend the Ordinances to you for
formal review and comment pursuant to 53 P.S. 10609(e).

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David M. Backenstoe', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

David M. Backenstoe

DMB/cmm
Enclosure
cc: Board of Supervisors (w/enc.)



Acknowledgement of Submission

Subdivision, Land Development or Stormwater Management Applications and Plans

Applicant Plainfield Twp.

Project Name Ordinance Review

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) staff will provide, upon request, an acknowledgement of submission of a subdivision, land development and/or stormwater management application(s), plan(s), and associated materials. This acknowledgement in no way conveys formal acceptance of a subdivision, land development and/or stormwater management plan intended for review and report in accordance with Section 502 (b) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code or Act 167 Storm Water Management Act and associated watershed plans. All plans will be checked by the LVPC for completeness and correct payment in accordance with applicable statutes and associated plans and ordinances as part of the formal acceptance process.

For Staff Use Only

Initials

Myl

Date

6/27/25

**TOWNSHIP OF PLAINFIELD
COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

ORDINANCE NO. ____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AMENDING THE PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING MAP, BY CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN LANDS SITUATE IN PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AS SPECIFICALLY DESCRIBED BELOW, FROM FARM AND FOREST (FF) DISTRICT TO SOLID WASTE PROCESSING AND DISPOSAL DISTRICT (SW) DISTRICT, SAID AREA TO BE REZONED IS APPROXIMATELY 212 ACRES AND IS LOCATED IN AN AREA GENERALLY BOUNDED BY PEN ARGYL ROAD (S.R. 1011) TO THE WEST, BOCCE CLUB ROAD (T-666) TO THE NORTH, AN OLD RAILWAY BED TO THE EAST (PARCEL E09-19-001A), AND DELABOLE ROAD (S.R. 1016) TO THE SOUTH.

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED and it is ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the Board of Supervisors of Plainfield Township, as follows:

SECTION 1: The zoning classification of the properties described and listed below, and depicted in Exhibit "A" attached hereto, is hereby changed from Farm and Forest (FF) Zoning District to Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW) Zoning District. The official Plainfield Township Zoning Map, adopted February 9, 2000, last revised December 4, 2007, shall be amended to reflect this change. The approximately 212 acres of land being reclassified and rezoned as Solid Waste Processing and Disposal (SW) Zoning District consists of the following eighteen (18) parcels, owned by Slate Spring Farms LLC, 131 Cross Creek Ct, Bethlehem PA 18017-3787, which are described by size and identified by Northampton County Tax Parcel Number:

1. 1.50 acre parcel, E8 13 1 0626
2. 9.95 acre parcel, E8 13 2 0626
3. 0.39 acre parcel, E8 13 3 0626
4. 2.008 acre parcel, E8 13 4 0626
5. 5.40 acre parcel, E8 13 5 0626
6. 1.00 acre parcel, E8 13 6 0626
7. 16.00 acre parcel, E8 13 7 0626
8. 0.7 acre parcel, E8 13 8 0626

9. 62.59 acre parcel, E8 13 10 0626
10. 0.35 acre parcel, E8 13 11 0626
11. 0.35 acre parcel, E8 13 12 0626
12. 0.35 acre parcel, E8 13 13 0626
13. 72.48 acre parcel, E8 13 14 0626
14. 19.55 acre parcel, E8 13 14A 0626
15. 0.69 acre parcel, E8 13 15 0626
16. 17.00 acre parcel, E8 13 16 0626
17. 1.35 acre parcel, E8 13 16A 0626
18. 1.00 acre parcel, E8 13 17 0626

The properties identified in numbers 1 through 18 above are generally bounded by Pen Argyl Road (S.R. 1011) to the west, Bocce Club Road (T-666) to the north, an old railway bed to the east (Parcel E09-19-001A), and Delabole Road (S.R. 1016) to the south.

SECTION 2: A true and correct copy of the Plainfield Township Zoning Map depicting the new district as reclassified and rezoned by this ordinance is attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit "B".

SECTION 3: SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be severable, and if any provision hereof shall be declared unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared as a legislative intent of the Township that this Ordinance would have been amended as if such unconstitutional, illegal or invalid provision or provisions had not been included herein.

SECTION 4: REPEALER. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances conflicting or inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance hereby adopted are hereby repealed.

SECTION 5: This Ordinance shall take effect five (5) days after its enactment.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED, into law by the Township of Plainfield, Northampton
County, Pennsylvania, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS

Paige Stefanelli, Township Manager

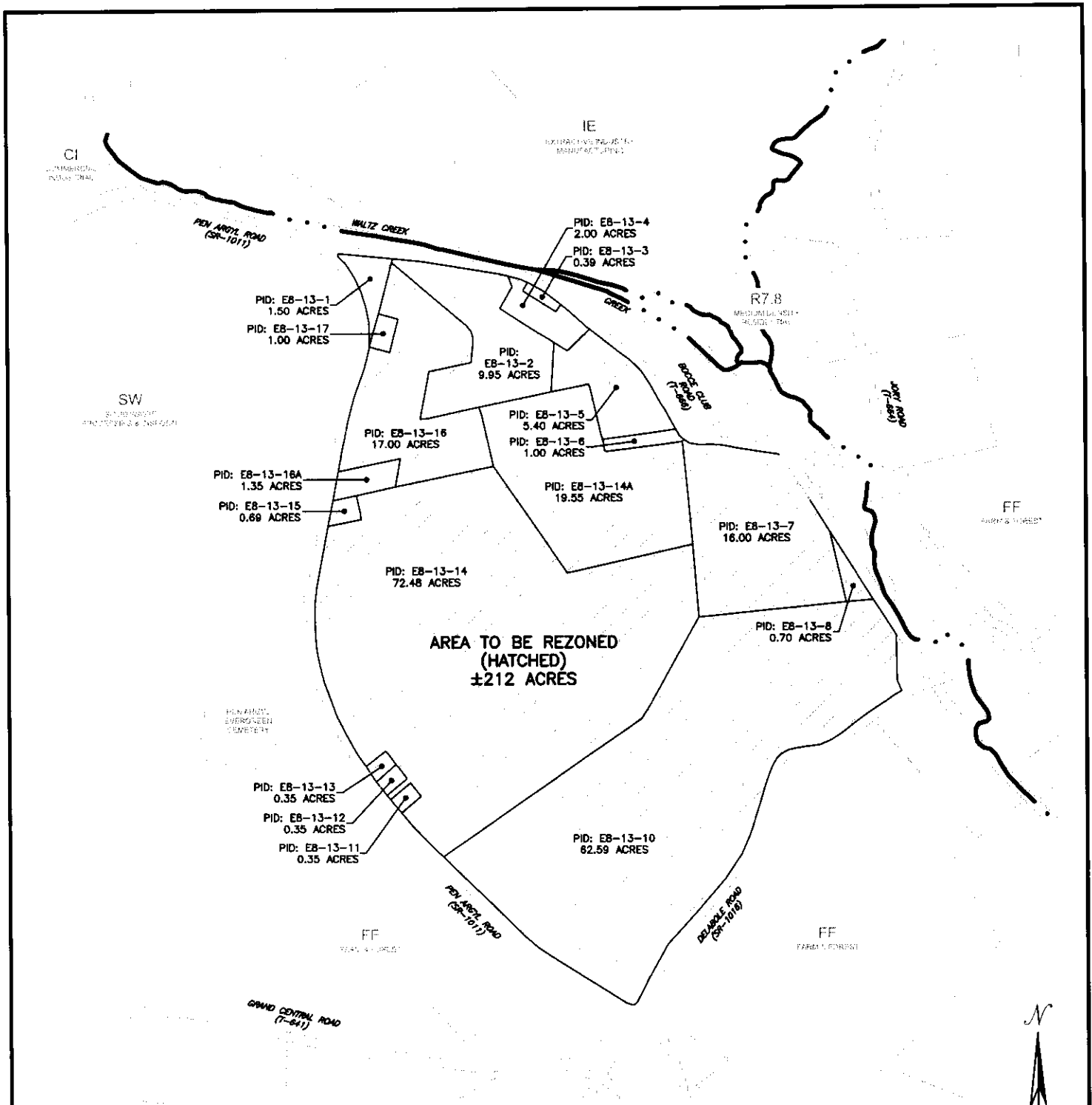
By: _____
Kenneth Field, Chairman

By: _____
Glenn Borger, Vice Chairman

By: _____
Ken Fairchild

By: _____
Nolan Kemmerer

By: _____
Jonathan Itterly



NOTE:
THIS PLAN INFORMATION REFERENCES
"EXHIBIT A REZONING AREA" PLAN
PROVIDED BY EARTHRES, DATED
4/22/2025. PARCEL BOUNDARIES
REFERENCED FROM COUNTY GIS
RESOURCES AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE
PENDING REVIEW OF BOUNDARY SURVEYS.

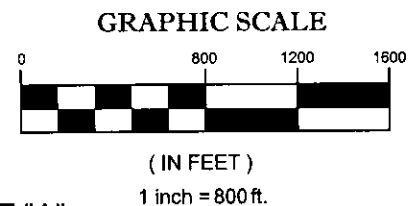


EXHIBIT "A"



**KEYSTONE
CONSULTING
ENGINEERS, INC.**

Engineering firm of choice since 1972

2870 EMRICK BOULEVARD, BETHLEHEM, PA 18020 610-865-4555
East Office: Bethlehem, West Office: Allentown, North Office: Kresgeville
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EASTERN EXPANSION ZONING

GRAND CENTRAL SANITARY LANDFILL

1963 PEN ARGYL ROAD
PEN ARGYL, PA 18072

PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

DWG. NO. PT-25-001

SCALE: 1" = 800'

DWN. BY: ANH

DATE: 6/10/2025

REVISED:

SHEET: 1 OF 1

Plainfield Township Zoning Map

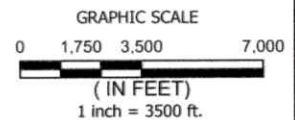
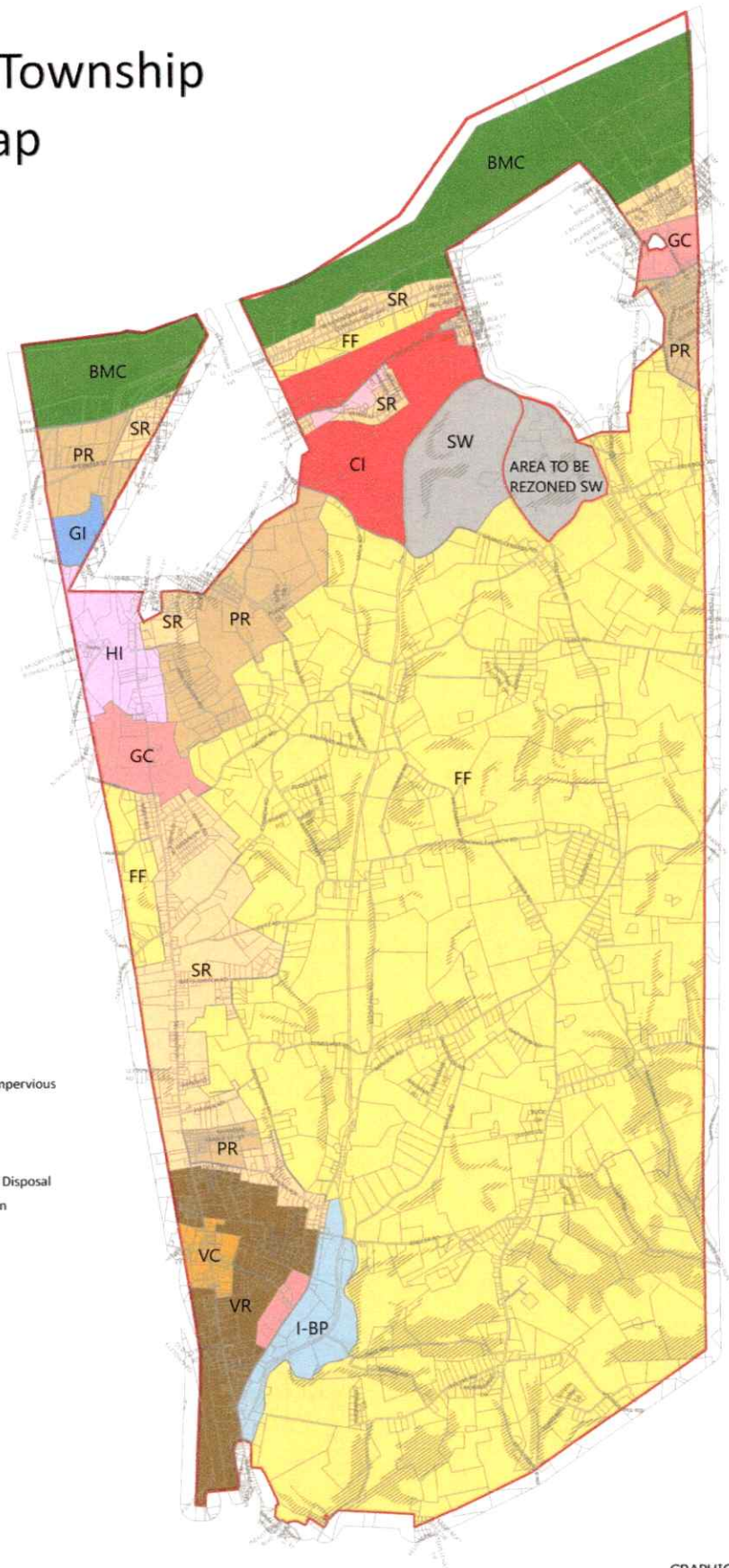


Legend

- Steep Slopes
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundary

Zoning Districts

- FF Farm and Forest
- SR Suburban Residential
- PR Planned Residential
- VR Village Residential
- HI Highway Interchange
- GC General/Commercial
- GC-50 General Commercial 50% Impervious
- CI Commercial/Industrial
- I-BP Industrial/Business Park
- GI General Industrial
- SW Solid Waste Processing and Disposal
- BMC Blue Mountain Conservation
- VC Village Center



DESIGNED BY	HJB	REVISIONS		EXHIBIT "B"
DRAWN BY	HJB	BY	1001	PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP
CHECKED BY	DC			ZONING MAP
DATE	2025-06-10			PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP
SCALE	1" = 3500'			NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
JOB NUMBER	PT-25-001			
SHEET	1 of 1			



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5012 MEDICAL CENTER CIRCLE, SUITE 1, ALLENTOWN, PA 18106 610-395-0971
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**TOWNSHIP OF PLAINFIELD
COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

ORDINANCE NO. ____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AMENDING THE PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE AS CODIFIED
AT SECTION 27-101 ET SEQ. AND AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME BY
CHANGING ALL SANITARY LANDFILL USES TO USES PERMITTED BY-RIGHT IN
THE SW – SOLID WASTE PROCESSING AND DISPOSAL DISTRICT, AND BY
PROVIDING ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SANITARY LANDFILL USES
PERMITTED BY-RIGHT.**

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED and it is ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the
Board of Supervisors of Plainfield Township, as follows:

~~Strike-through~~ indicates language to be deleted.

Underlining indicates language to be added.

SECTION 1: Section 27-316 “Additional Requirements for Certain Permitted-By-Right
Uses,” Subsection KK shall be amended to read as follows:

KK. Sanitary Landfill. ~~Involving the disposal of 100 or less tons of solid waste per day.~~

(1) – (19) to remain

(20) A traffic impact analysis shall be required in accordance with section 27-410.
The Board of Supervisors may use the results of this analysis to require off-site
traffic improvements in order to minimize traffic congestion and to achieve safe
and efficient circulation.

(21) An overall phasing plan of the entire landfill area shall be submitted and a phased-
approach to solid waste disposal shall be required to minimize impacts. The
Township Supervisors, after review of the site and phasing plans and other
required information, may establish a maximum size for each phase. Prior to
starting work in each new phase, the level of past performance may be a basis for
limiting work in other phases.

(22) The amount of waste disposed at the landfill shall not exceed 3,000 tons per day;
nor shall it exceed an average of 2,750 tons per day over any quarter.

(23) Topographic cross-sections, drawn at various locations across the landfill, shall be submitted showing the future, final height of the proposed landfill. To the extent not preempted by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Township may require height limitations to protect scenic features and to achieve land use compatibility.

SECTION 2: Section 27-319 “Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW),”

subsection 2 “Uses Permitted by Right,” subsection G shall be amended as follows:

- G. Sanitary landfill, ~~involving the disposal of 100 or less tons of solid waste per day.~~
[5] *Note: See section 27-316 for additional requirements; site plan review required (see section 27-409).*

SECTION 3: Section 27-319 “Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW),”

subsection 4 “Conditional Uses” shall be amended as follows:

- A. ~~Sanitary landfill, involving the disposal of more than 100 tons of solid waste per day.~~

SECTION 4: Section 27-320 “Conditional Uses,” subsection 5.I.(1) – (23) “Sanitary Landfill. Involving the disposal of more than 100 tons of solid waste per day” shall be deleted in its entirety.

SECTION 5: SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be severable, and if any provision hereof shall be declared unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared as a legislative intent of the Township that this Ordinance would have been amended as if such unconstitutional, illegal or invalid provision or provisions had not been included herein.

SECTION 6: REPEALER. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances conflicting or inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance hereby adopted are hereby repealed.

SECTION 7: This Ordinance shall take effect five (5) days after its enactment.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED, into law by the Township of Plainfield, Northampton
County, Pennsylvania, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS

Paige Stefanelli, Township Manager

By: _____
Kenneth Field, Chairman

By _____
Glenn Borger, Vice Chairman

By: _____
Ken Fairchild

By: _____
Nolan Kemmerer

By: _____
Jonathan Itterly

**TOWNSHIP OF PLAINFIELD
COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

ORDINANCE NO. ____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AMENDING THE PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE AS CODIFIED
AT SECTION 27-101 ET SEQ. AND AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME BY
EXEMPTING SANITARY LANDFILLS IN THE SW DISTRICT FROM THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE STEEP SLOPE OVERLAY DISTRICT.**

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED and it is ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the
Board of Supervisors of Plainfield Township, as follows:

~~Strike through~~ indicates language to be deleted.

Underlining indicates language to be added.

SECTION 1: Section 27-503.3 “Steep Slope Overlay District, General Provisions,”
subsection A. shall be amended as follows:

- A. The Steep Slope Overlay District shall be an overlay on all zoning districts. For any lot or portion thereof lying within the Steep Slope Overlay District, the regulations of the overlay district shall take precedence over the regulations of the underlying district. Exception: Notwithstanding any other provision(s) of this Zoning Ordinance to the contrary, the regulations of this section 27-503 shall not apply to a sanitary landfill use within the Solid Waste Processing and Disposal District (SW) because such use is appropriately regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, involving a detailed review of environmental impacts, and requiring ongoing inspections, both during and after the active life of the landfill.

SECTION 2: SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be severable, and if any provision hereof shall be declared unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared as a legislative intent of the Township that this Ordinance would have been amended as if such unconstitutional, illegal or invalid provision or provisions had not been included herein.

SECTION 3: REPEALER. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances conflicting or inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance hereby adopted are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4: This Ordinance shall take effect five (5) days after its enactment.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED, into law by the Township of Plainfield, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS

Paige Stefanelli, Township Manager

By: _____
Kenneth Field, Chairman

By: _____
Glenn Borger, Vice Chairman

By: _____
Ken Fairchild

By: _____
Nolan Kemmerer

By: _____
Jonathan Itterly