



PLANNING DEPARTMENT
C u m b e r l a n d C o u n t y

Cumberland County Review Report

Cumberland County Planning Department
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Recommendation: *Approval With Comments*

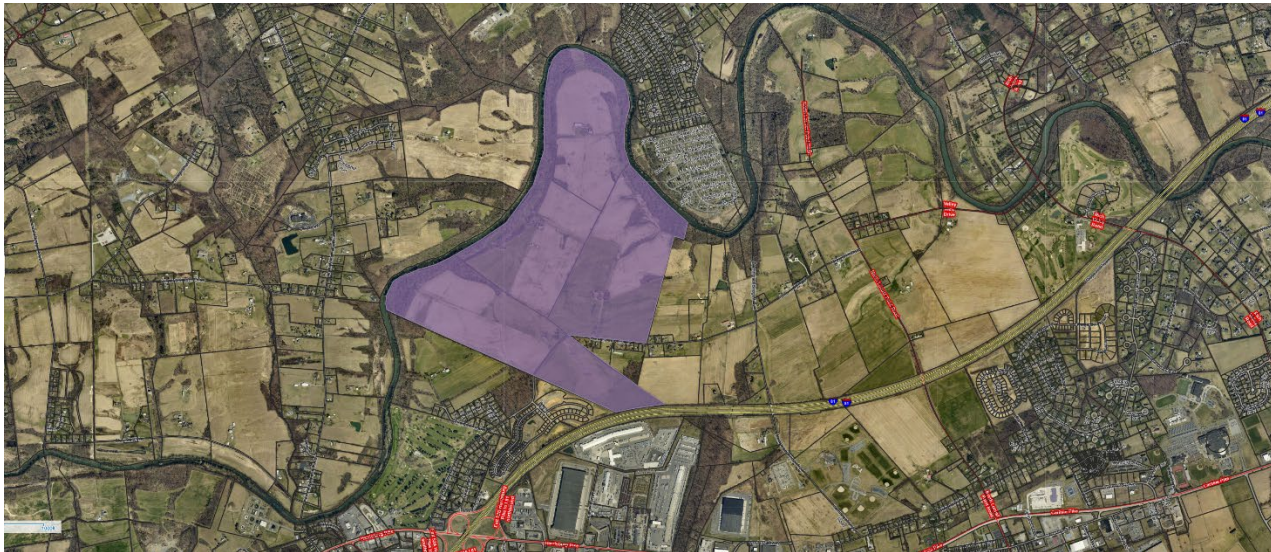
<i>Name of Amendment:</i>				
Data Center Overlay District				
<i>Municipality:</i>	<i>Date Received:</i>	<i>Date Reviewed:</i>	<i>Reviewed By:</i>	<i>Checked By:</i>
Middlesex Township	4/25/2025	5/15/2025	SH, EG, KS	Planning Commission
<i>Type of Amendment:</i>				
Zoning Map & Text Amendment				

Explanation of Amendment:

Middlesex Township has submitted a zoning ordinance map and text amendment that would create a data center overlay district and specific regulations for the overlay district. The text proposed will require data centers to connect to public water and public sewer. In addition, setbacks, screening and façade improvements will be required. The following parcels are included in the overlay district:

Parcel Number	Property Owner	Address	Acreage
21-06-0015-001	KMWW	246 Country Club Road	143.87
21-06-0015-013	Club Road Properties Limited	256 Country Club Road	190.54
21-06-0015-014	KMWW	250 Country Club Road	147.32
21-06-0015-015	KMWW	248 Country Club Road	212.42
Total:			694.15

The overlay district will include 694 acres. The area is shaded on the following aerial photograph.



Consistency:

Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan

The 2024 Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan¹ is organized around the Cumberland Principles. These principles guide effective planning practices which benefit the environment, economic development, and the community. The following table determines consistency between the proposed amendment and the Cumberland Principles.

The Cumberland Principles (Comprehensive plan page number)	Recommendations for Enhanced Consistency
Protect the Best First (page 20)	- The proposed overlay district includes 694 acres of open space and agricultural land. - The ordinance amendment could consider setback and buffer provisions to protect sensitive natural features within the overlay such as riparian buffers, floodplain, steep slopes, and impacts to the viewshed of the Appalachian Trail.
Grow In Not Out (page 29)	The overlay district is currently served by public water. Public sewer service will have to be extended into the area.
Plan for People and Places (page 44)	The proposed text includes requirements for setbacks, screening and building façade improvements.
Adapt and Stay Safe (page 64)	Data centers provide the necessary IT infrastructure that fuels everyday life.
Open for Business (page 71)	- Job creation in an emerging sector. - High taxable valuation creates substantial tax revenue.

Comments and Recommendations:

1. The township should review the existing zoning ordinance and the proposed numbering. It appears that article 23 regulates the institutional (INS) zoning district.

¹ <https://www.cumberlandcountypa.gov/4888/Comprehensive-Plan>

2. The amendment should include the following definitions:

- a. Green Wall
- b. Fenestration
- c. Façade
- d. Offices
- e. Essential services

3. The township should consider additional clarification of the requirement for public sewer and water service. Is public water supply required for cooling and operation of a data center? Section 23.07 implies that a municipal water system is an optional supply for data center use and operations.
4. The township is in the process of adopting a new zoning ordinance. CCPD recommends incorporating the proposed DCO into the new ordinance rather than amending the current ordinance that was adopted in 1989.

However, the CCPD recognizes understands a major data center project warrants an expedited update of the ordinance amendment.

5. The Middlesex Township Comprehensive Plan was adopted in February 2003. Numerous zoning changes, land use trends and development pressure have changed the landscape in Middlesex Township. The township should consider adopting a new comprehensive plan to guide growth and development of the township.

"Section 505 (b) and 609 (g) of the Municipalities Planning Code requires that amendments to municipal ordinances be filed with the county planning agency. If this amendment is approved, please forward a final copy to the county planning office so we may update our records."