

Monica Schryver—102 Valley Creek Lane, Spring City, PA 19475 East Vincent Township
May 12, 2025 Citizens Advisory Council
Statement Presented on Data Center Ordinance Guidelines

My name is Monica Schryver, and I am an East Vincent resident. I contributed to the data center ordinance for my Township that would permit a data center to be built near residents and a Veteran’s Center, and what I concluded at the end of six months is that there is not an ordinance protective enough to allow data centers near residential, ecological, or high risk areas.

Your Data Center Guide states, ““In Southeast Pennsylvania, data centers are most appropriate in heavy industrial settings, which are typically located away from residential or other sensitive uses.” This statement says it all—why then are there pages of “guidelines” permitting data centers to be built near our neighborhoods?

Pennsylvanians are “Being sold down the river” at the hands of the Commissions and Boards whose members should be protecting them. When we look back some day, what is being allowed in Pennsylvania and across this country will be a painful reminder of the lack of protection recommended by our commissions. Why doesn’t this guide include scientific studies and testimonies about the harmful impacts of data centers? Draining our aquifers and contaminating our water including forever chemicals, contaminating our air, destroying habitats, and ultimately collapsing species into extinction.

This document is not the “Be All End All” of an effective data center ordinance; and yet, it is being referenced now throughout our state as if it were. This is dangerous! Especially when it’s a document heavy on what the data center industry can do and painfully lacking in protective guidelines. This document clearly states that data centers should be built away from residents and sensitive uses and yet data centers are being built in our backyards!

Planning Commissions in PA have a responsibility to its residents. Defined as [The PA Department of Community and Economic Development defines a planning commission as] ‘**a dynamic discipline that works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating** more convenient, equitable, **healthful**, efficient, and **attractive places for present and future.**” https://www.crcog.net/vertical/Sites/%7B6AD7E2DC-ECE4-41CD-B8E1-BAC6A6336348%7D/uploads/The_Planning_Commission_in_Pennsylvania.pdf

Data centers take these attributes away from a community—they do not build **healthful and attractive places**—They destroy them—unless there are measures in a data center ordinance that protects them. If diamonds dazzle the eyes, one can only see the benefit not the detriment of data centers especially when built near residential homes, schools, hospitals, and natural resources.

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What good is winning the global AI race when there is no one left to cheer the winners? Protective regulations must be the **rule and not the exception**. Where is the bond requirement necessary for decommissioning? It's not a new concept, but it is a protective one. Why is emergency management and training a community benefit and not a requirement? Why are environmental protections a community benefit? Why aren't there clearly defined setbacks especially protective for those living near data centers? We are betraying our Climate Action Plans, our County Comprehensive Plans' protective goals, and ultimately our commitments to the natural resources that sustain our lives. We are going backwards.

In conclusion, it would be a myopic world if government regulatory commissions overlooked the very real harms and problems that come with an industry like data centers. I am asking the Planning Commission members in both counties to revise this guide to include safety measures that are strong and backed by scientific research and data. We cannot afford to compromise the health and safety of the residents in Chester and Montgomery County and throughout Pennsylvania. They are guaranteed rights. Pennsylvanians need you to be brave and do what is right for yourselves and the individuals you serve! And if you can't do it, form a committee that can. Thank you!

I have included information from my research that supports the above statements I have made today:

From the National Library of Medicine, "Air pollution is the most acute concern. Fossil-fueled power plants and diesel backup generators that power data centers emit hazardous pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter, increasing rates of respiratory diseases, cardiovascular conditions, and elevating cancer risk in nearby communities. A recent model indicates that the U.S. data centers in 2030 could contribute to nearly 1300 deaths annually, resulting in a public health burden of more than \$20 billion [3]." <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12273412/>

As it stands today, the Chester County Climate Action Plan, "Chester County's vision for Climate Action is to reduce the county's contribution to global climate change and equitably improve the health and well-being of the community by: reducing greenhouse emissions through government leadership and collaboration, mitigating impacts of climate

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change through resiliency and planning, and transitioning to clean and sustainable energy
generation.” <https://www.chescoplanning.org/Environmental/pdf/ClimateActionPlan.pdf>

From the Chester County Landscapes 3 Protection Section of its Comprehensive Plan:

- a. Guide development away from sensitive natural resources and toward areas appropriate for accommodating growth.
- b. Support comprehensive protection and restoration of the county's ecosystems including woodlands, wetlands, surface waters, riparian corridors, groundwater, floodplains, soil health, steep slopes, aquatic and wildlife habitats, and natural heritage areas.
- c. Support municipal and regional natural resource protection efforts, and promote a resource-based planning approach.
- d. Promote the environmental, aesthetic, and economic value of protecting and restoring natural resources to residents and municipalities.
- e. Promote groundwater recharge, stormwater runoff and pollution reduction, flood mitigation and resiliency, and water quality improvement and protection to support safe and healthy communities.
- f. Ensure a safe, clean, long-term supply of water to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.

<https://www.chescoplanning.org/landscapes3/Protect.cfm>