

JOBE PUBLISHING, INC.

OPINION

The opinions of writers on this page are not necessarily those of the newspaper, or management. We encourage our readers to share their views for publication. Thanks so much for choosing the Barren County Progress.

June 24, 2026



When Politics Overtakes Process



JEFF JOBE
COMMUNITY PUBLISHER BARREN COUNTY PROGRESS/JPI

Boys & Girls Club gets initial zoning approval for expansion

MIKE HEUER
Community News

The Boys & Girls Club of Glasgow-Barren County secured initial approval for the rezoning of an adjacent 2-acre property at 801 Columbia Ave. to expand its services.

The property mostly is zoned commercial, but a proposed parking area would be on property currently zoned as residential, which triggered the request to rezone it as commercial.

The Joint City-County Planning Commission of Barren County on Monday evening unanimously approved rezoning the property that is located directly east of the Boys & Girls Club's existing campus at 701 Columbia Ave.

The site has signs showing an artist's rendering of the proposed building that club CEO Mallie Boston said would enable it to greatly expand its services to more Barren County families.

She described the Boys & Girls Club as the "marginally the cheapest" child care available to local families, who can pay about \$45 per child



▲ Mike Heuer | BCP Photo

The Boys & Girls Club of Glasgow-Barren County on June 15 obtained preliminary zoning approval to develop a 2-acre parcel at 801 Columbia Ave. in Glasgow.

for membership, plus other fees, and \$200 for summer camp, which includes all meals.

Boston said the club currently serves between 175 and 180 children from Barren County and has another 100 on a waiting list. Expanding onto the adjacent property would enable it to add many more children.

A day after the meeting, Boston told The Progress that the club is available to all families in Barren County who have access to transportation to bring their children to the club.

A project engineer explained the 2-acre parcel is vacant, but it still has the foundation and some asphalt from

a prior structure.

An entrance exists off Columbia Ave, but the proposed development would add access to First Street for families who are dropping off and picking up children, along with any other transportation that might be used.

The project would include building privacy screens for adjacent residential property, which could include a berm, trees and a privacy fence.

The owners of two adjacent properties told commission members they support the Boys & Girls Club, and one was a former member as a child, but they had concerns.

One worried about possible trespassing,

but the project engineer suggested a privacy fence could prevent it.

The other asked what kinds of trees might be added and the possible impact on his property during the fall months, when leaves or fallen pine tree needles might fall onto his land.

The project engineer said that could be worked out to ensure no impact on the man's home and land.

The site has access to utilities and otherwise conforms with city regulations.

The commission unanimously okayed the proposed rezoning, which also must be approved by the Glasgow City Council.

If the allegations circulating at the end of the May primary had been true, our community would have had a serious problem. Claims of secret deals, conflicts of interest and unethical conduct by public officials deserve to be investigated.

That is exactly what this newspaper did.

Today, it appears the loudest voices warning that the sky was falling were fueled more by political disappointment, misinformation, outside lobbying efforts and fear than by verifiable facts.

People can reasonably oppose a data center. They can raise concerns about growth, infrastructure, utilities or community character. Those discussions are healthy and necessary. What is not healthy is allowing speculation and political narratives to replace facts and established procedures.

Ironically, Cave City and Barren County may ultimately benefit from the controversy.

Planning and Zoning Executive Director Kevin Myatt understood that industrially zoned property could attract a data center or similar development. He and the Planning Commission were working to establish safeguards and regulations before such a project arrived. It was an effort to prepare the community, not promote a particular development.

Instead, public pressure produced a knee-jerk response. Cave City leaders rejected the Planning Commission's approach, adopted a moratorium and halted a process that would have included public hearings and community input.

Now the city is facing litigation.

The central issue is not whether someone supports or opposes a data center. It is whether property owners were allowed the process and protections guaranteed under Kentucky law. The plaintiffs argue they were not, and a court will decide that question.

The unfortunate reality is that the very protections many citizens were demanding were already being developed through the Planning and Zoning process before it was interrupted.

The lesson may be simple: good policy is rarely created through fear, rumors or political pressure. It is created through facts, public participation and due process.

Had that process been allowed to work, Cave City might have avoided finding itself in court. Instead, taxpayers and property owners now await a judge's decision on what should have been debated in a public hearing.

Celebrate America's 250th with Local Fourth of July Events

Barren River Lake Fireworks Celebration

The Friends of Barren River Lake and Park will celebrate Independence Day with a Fourth of July fireworks display on Saturday, July 4, at Barren River Lake. The fireworks show is presented by 2B RV and Boat Storage.

Cave Area Fourth of July Celebration

The Cave Area Conference Center will host a Fourth of July celebration and fireworks show on Friday, July 3, at 502 Mammoth Cave Street in Cave City. Festivities begin at 6 p.m. and will feature food trucks, music and games, with the fireworks display beginning at dusk. Vendors are welcome to participate, with food vendor spaces available. A rain date of July 6 has been scheduled if needed. For additional information, contact Jennifer McNett at cavacitycenter@gmail.com