



POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

140 College Drive, Pottstown, PA 19464 | PARRCoordinator@gmail.com | 484-945-0200

PARRC Meeting Minutes

April 22nd, 2020 (REV – 5/29/20)

4:00 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.

a Zoom meeting

In Attendance:

Cathy Paretti, Upper Pottsgrove Township
Michael Lenhart, Borough of Pottstown
Bill Keohane, Lower Pottsgrove Township
Jay Erb, North Coventry Township

Craig Colistra, PAHWF
John Cover, MCPC
Marley Bice, MCPC

Meeting notes:

1. Meeting minutes from February 26th, 2020 were approved. There was no meeting in March due to the coronavirus quarantine.
2. Wish List for Projects – all municipalities submitted a wish list of projects for the Regional Recreation Coordinator to review and use when applying for grants. The Regional Recreation Coordinator will be contacting each PARRC representative to discuss the prioritization of the projects.
3. Goals & Objectives for Regional Recreation Coordinator – M. Lenhart reviewed and discussed 4 priorities for the evaluation: 1) Grant funding & administration; 2) Open Space & Master Plan design; 3) Community Involvement; 4) Regional approach.
4. PARRC Strategic Plan proposals – M Lane discussed that the approvals and contract had been signed and Barbara Heller of BerryDunn has started gathering information for the plan. M. Lane advised that the members may be getting information from Barbara discussing the process for the plan and a questionnaire. He advised that if we can meet in May, Barbara might be able to address the members.
5. Coronavirus mitigation measures in each municipality –

Pottstown Borough – Playgrounds are closed and playgrounds that are used a lot, they have had to install physical barriers in the form of tape to keep users off. They took down basketball hoops, closed the Bark Park with a chain and suspended organized/formalized programs and events in parks with 5 or more people. They have installed guideline signs and caution tape. They are cancelling programs until mid-May and will check 3 weeks prior to a program in May to see if it should be cancelled. 4th of July celebration rescheduled to Memorial Day. The Rumble is still scheduled for June.

North Coventry – All parks and trails are open, but restrooms and playgrounds are closed. All Chester County parks and trails are open, but restrooms and playgrounds are closed. Coventry Woods Festival has been rescheduled to fall. Hanover Meadows Park ribbon cutting rescheduled for fall. Athletic events and pavilion rentals are still being scheduled for summer.

Lower Pottsgrove – All parks and trails are open, but playgrounds at Sanatoga and Gerald Richards Park are closed. Summer concert series are still on.

Upper Pottsgrove - All parks and trails are open, except for Heather Place Park which is closed. Other playgrounds are closed as well. All programs on hold until after all the issues from the sale of the sewer system are worked out.

East Coventry - All parks and trails are open and playground at Ellis Woods Park is sanitized every day. The 5 and 10K have been rescheduled for fall.

Douglass Township - All parks and trails are open, but playground and swings are taped off.



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West Pottsgrove – All parks are open, but playgrounds are closed.

Montgomery County – All parks are closed but trails are open. They are trying to encourage bikers to use streets and leave trails for pedestrians. DVRPC has a map for safe bike routes. Bikers are allowed on the SRT.

6. Trust for Public Lands: 10-minute walk initiative – Diane Kripas from DCNR reached out to C. Colistra and the Regional Director of the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) to discuss a collaborative grant opportunity. The TPL is trying to increase access and decrease barriers to parks, trails and public lands within a 10-minute walk of residents. They have been pressuring elected officials in mostly larger cities and are now looking at smaller cities to increase access by the year 2050. DCNR is willing to fund a pilot program that follows their Comp Plan of 2020-2024 to build better relationships with schools to increase sharing of their facilities. The scope of the initiative at this time would be to acquire a letter of commitment to convene meetings with the schools and municipalities. The ultimate goal is the development of joint use agreements for the shared use of school facilities. The process would then be used for the rest of the state if it is successful.
7. House Bill 1822 and Amendment A05143 – M. Lane discussed that he sent a Letter of Support to Deny Amendment A05143 (that was tucked in House Bill 1822) to the PARRC members State Representatives and Senators. The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, the Environmental Stewardship Fund, and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund are among 8 state environmentally focused special funds that are being targeted. State agencies would be forbidden to enter into contracts to make environmental, conservation and recreation investments using money in these special funds until the Governor ends the Covid-19 disaster emergency. M. Lane will send information to the members.
8. Mobile Trail Sensors – M. Lane discussed the availability of 3 mobile trail sensors that can be used at one time events or short-term programs to count users. A calendar with scheduled use was developed and sent to PARRC. NCT stated they could use one at Kenilworth Park to see if disc golf use has increased during the quarantine. M. Lane will send C. Paretti and map of trail sensors in UPT. M. Lane discussed that he will be downloading trail sensor data from all trail sensors on Friday, May 1 and will be removing the trail sensor at the entrance to Althouse Arboretum to use at Kenilworth Park.
9. PARRC website – M. Lane discussed that he developed a website for PARRC. It was developed on Wix.com from a template. He will investigate to see if it can be sent to members for their review but without their ability to edit it.
10. Updates from the PARRC members:
 - a. PAHWF: C. Colistra stated that the PAHWF has been addressing food security issues during the pandemic in Pottstown. They have been coordinating connections between residents and food providers. The food is there but distribution is the problem. They are continuing their grants programs as well.
 - b. MCPC: The second round of the PMRPC grants has been completed. The first check to awardees for the third round of the PMRPC grants was sent. They submitted a grant to DCNR requesting more funding for round four. They requested \$150,000 with a match from PAHWF for a \$300,000 possible pool of funds for the next round. Montgomery County Commissioners have discussed closing the trails because of the lack of social distancing and overcrowding on the trails. The 2040 grant program is open and \$1.5 million dollars is available to fund projects. They are partnering with DVRPC to do a study to quantify the value of the natural environment. It is called “Return on the Environment” and they are seeking to better understand what the value of protecting open space is as it would help them support their open space initiatives. DVRPC is developing a community survey for a trail study on High Street from West Pottsgrove, through the Borough and Lower Pottsgrove Township.



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- c. North Coventry Township – J. Erb stated that he has observed more families with teens in their parks. J. Erb requested that M. Lane attend a meeting at Kenilworth Park to review an area needing new plantings where trees were removed. Friday at 9:00 AM was scheduled.
- d. Pottstown Borough: M. Lenhart stated that their big summer programs are not in schools this year because of the pandemic and they are not sure what will happen. They are looking for other venues for the programs. They currently do not have a good relationship with the schools for sharing facilities. He has noticed since youth are out of school, there has been more vandalism in the parks.
- e. Lower Pottsgrove: B. Keohane requested that M. Lane discuss with Ed Wagner the options for the Gerald Richards Park project since the bids came in so high.
- f. West Pottsgrove Township: No updates.
- g. Upper Pottsgrove Township: Pottsgrove Recreation Board will be updating the Township on their summer programs.
- h. Douglass Township: No updates.
- i. East Coventry Township: M. Lane confirmed a meeting Tuesday at 9:00 AM with K. Nocella to walk trails to review renovations to them. They have closed on protecting the 31-acre DiBono Property. They have a \$106,000 conservation easement on a 15-acre property from Chester. She is negotiating with PECO for a new trail through her property to the Ussler Open Space tract. She is going to work with J. Erb to connect her Township with North Coventry near Peterman Road to the Kulp tract. She discussed the removal of a 200-year-old oak tree from the Ussler Property that was next to a trail easement the Township has with the family.

Adjournment: 6:15 PM

Recorder: M. Lane

2020 Meeting Schedule

(All meetings to be held at 5:00 PM in the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation Conference Room, 152 East High Street, 5th floor, Pottstown, PA 19464):

<i>January 22</i>	<i>February 26</i>	<i>March 25</i>	<i>April 22</i>	<i>May 27</i>	<i>June 24</i>
<i>July 22</i>	<i>August 26</i>	<i>September 23</i>	<i>October 28</i>	<i>December 3</i>	

Next meeting: May 27, 2020 Location and time to be announced.