



POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

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PARRC Meeting Minutes

December 01, 2016

5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

@PAHWF

In attendance:

Craig Colistra, PAHWF
Jay Erb, North Coventry Township
Donna Fabry, Montgomery County
Dave Kraybill, PAHWF
Tony Kuklinski, Douglass Township
Michael Lane, Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Coordinator
Michael Lenhart, Pottstown Borough
Carol Lewis, Upper Pottsgrove Township
Craig Lloyd, West Pottsgrove
Josh Stouch, Douglass Township
Charlie Valentine, West Pottsgrove Township
Rich Woods, Lower Pottsgrove

Meeting notes:

1. Governing Regulations were reviewed and formally approved.
2. Contact Information List was reviewed and formally approved.
3. Michael L. reviewed the tasks that have been completed and new tasks scheduled since he was hired on October 26th.
4. Spotted Lanternfly:
 - a. It was discussed that the quarantine has expanded to include more townships including Upper Pottsgrove, Pottstown Borough and North Coventry. A map with new municipalities included will be issued later this month. The Department of Agriculture is concerned that it is spreading from Ailanthus trees to agricultural crops.
5. Emerald Ash Borer:
 - a. Carol L. discussed the issues surrounding the removal of Ash trees infected with Emerald Ash borers. They have received bids from tree removal companies but they are expensive. They are looking for grants to assist them with the removal costs. They have considered allowing residents to cut the trees down to use for firewood as long as the firewood stays within the township.
6. Craig C. announced that Holly Kennedy, the Director of PAL, is leaving and the Board Chairman will serve as the Interim Director. Craig C. will forward Michael Lane contact information of the Interim Director.
7. Craig C. discussed an offer by the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB):
 - a. Howard Brown, in PAHWF, discussed with Travis Geiser, Sports Sales Manager, a possible partnership for the VFTCB to promote and market sports events around the Pottstown area. The VFTCB supports itself with a 2% room tax on hotels in

Montgomery County, membership dues and state grants. There are different sales managers for different events such as weddings, tours, meetings and the VFTCB helps them promote their venues. The interest in the area began with the Sports Complex Feasibility Study being undertaken by the VFTCB for a new location for a large sports complex. Craig C. discussed possibly having a Regional Recreation event for area non-profits, schools, municipalities to discuss the partnership. It was suggested there could be a presentation by the VFTCB on what they do now and what they see for our region. Craig C. proposed that the PARRC could be the conduit for regional coordination with VFTCB. The discussion concluded with Craig C. stating he will obtain more information from Howard Brown and possibly having an event this spring with VFTCB.

8. Michael L. reported that he had a conversation with Ryan Emerson, Grant Director for the DCED CFA GTRP grant program about the four denied grant applications: Memorial Park; Hanover Meadows; Gerald Richards Athletic Field and SWM and Douglass Park. The grant round had \$70,000,000 of project money requested and the program only had \$14,000,000 in the budget. There were no major problems with the grant applications but Ryan E. gave recommendations to strengthen the applications if we apply again. In the CFA GRTP program guidelines booklet, on page 5 are the 7 guidelines they look for when evaluating an application. What are not explained are these particular requirements in the guidelines - 1) - *The economic conditions of the region where the project is located.* Is the region/local area depressed economically? He said that needs to be highlighted somewhere, maybe the narrative. 2) - *The level of matching investment.* He said they look more favorably if the investment is exceeded with matching funds by at least 10%. So a minimum amount of 25% cash, in-kind, etc. is what they like to see. 3) - *Regional nature of the project.* He said they like to see support letters from other municipalities that may be impacted/ benefit from the project and not just a support letter from the municipality that is applying. 4) *Local financial support.* He said they like to see funds from non-profits, business's and/or other sponsors as it is a way of seeing larger community support for the project. 5) *Project readiness.* He said they like to see how soon it can be constructed, if all design/engineering is done so that it can be done quickly. 6) *Current availability of greenway, recreational and trail facilities in the area.* He said they look for the need for this project. For example, if this is for basketball courts, are there already ones close by or in the area and if so, why are these important to seek funding for. They don't like to fund duplication of services unless there is a distinction. Why is this so important/unique to fund? 7) *Financial need.* They look for the applicant to highlight and demonstrate that there are limited resources to do the project. This has to do with a municipalities overall budget and what they can realistically commit. This is a double edged sword because it relates back to #1 and #2. I think they are looking for creative ways that the municipality went out and acquired additional funds from other sources and not just funds from other grants. Did they partner with anyone for the funds? What business's benefit from the recreation resource and were they asked to financially support the construction of it? I also discussed with him the politics of the applications. Other than getting a support letter from the local and state representatives, he was not aware of the political deals that go on around each project. If an elected official wanted the project to move forward, he would have to lobby the committee members pretty heavily. He did say that if we were going to reapply, they would look more favorably on the applications and move them up the list for consideration but, they would still need to be strengthened.
9. Michael Lane reported on the Tri-County Trail Study meeting with DVRPC on 11/21/16. DVRPC presented and discussed the study to date. DVRPC gave the attendees a draft report with maps to review. Michael Lane submitted the plans to North Coventry; West, Upper and Lower Pottsgrove and Pottstown Borough for review of trails and the priority projects.

DVRPC is hoping to finalize the draft report mid-January and then it will be sent to the Townships for review.

10. Michael Lane discussed standardizing each Townships website so that recreational resources are easily found, are more informative and that there are plans for users to review. Michael Lane asked Donna F. if the plans that were produced by the Tri-County Trails Study and the Feasibility report were available to PARRC. Donna L. will follow up with Michael Lane on the information.
11. Grant program application openings were discussed.
 - a. PAHWF Letter of Intent is due February 1, 2017. They require 50% match for capital projects.
 - b. DVRPC CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program) – a discussion ensued regarding applying for the application for the loss of trees on a regional basis. But a review of the website indicated that eligible projects include pedestrian and bicycle projects, transit improvement projects congestion reduction and traffic flow improvements and others but no mention of removing trees.
 - c. MontCO 2040 information will be forwarded to Michael Lane by Donna F.
 - d. The William Penn foundation was mentioned as a possible grant source. PARRC has not applied for funding from them.
12. “Free” Milkweed plants for Monarch Butterfly habitat was discussed. PARRC members received plants in the past and were interested this year as well. Michael L. stated that he will review the grant application and coordinate its submittal.
13. DCNR & PA Trails Advisory Committee are seeking trail accomplishments for 2016. Carol L. will forward trail information to Michael Lane to submit to DCNR.
14. The meeting concluded with updates from the PARRC partners:
 - a. PAHWF: Grant applications are being accepted this year.
 - b. MontCO: A new initiative called Bike Montco is being developed. It will look at all bike programs and facilities and review and compile information concerning routes, safety issues and connections for all levels of riders.
 - c. Douglass Township: Several large residential developments are being planned and are in to the Township for review.
 - d. Lower Pottsgrove Township: a new development called Sanatoga Green is being planned near Sanatoga Park.
 - e. West Pottsgrove Township: Craig L. reported that the engineer for the bridge projects in Murgia Park are also looking into bank erosion and have not submitted plans for review until further information is added to them and they discuss the permits with DEP. Craig L. also reported they are meeting with Waste Management (WM) concerning the monitoring of houses WM owns.
 - f. Pottstown Borough: Mike L. announced that the Borough will be consolidating its holiday weekend events on 12/9/16 with the help of PDIDA, they have one more seat left on the Radio City Music Hall trip and the Polar Bear Swim at Riverfront Park will be held on 1/1/17.
 - g. Upper Pottsgrove: Carol L. announced that the Eagle Scout project, a bridge over a small creek, was completed and that Chestnut Grove Park was done and the grass is taking nicely. She also announced they are considering amending their zoning for the landfill to allow for more creative uses of the property. A solar farm was mentioned. The Township has two open space parcels and she asked for suggestions on possible uses. Several suggestions included equestrian trails, disc-golf course, off-road vehicles track, orienteering course, recreational remote control miniature vehicles, an off-leash dog park and a drone park. It was suggested that she contact the Montgomery/Berks Disc Alliance for the disc golf course use.

They have volunteers that will build the course. For the recreational remote control miniature vehicles, it was suggested she review the track at Modellbahn Ott Hobbies off Rt. 100 in Gilbertsville. Behind the hobby building is an earthen track.

2017 Meeting Schedule (All meetings to be held at 5:00 PM in the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation Offices, 152 East High Street, 5th floor, Pottstown, PA 19464):

January 25	February 22	March 22	April 26
May 24	June 28	July 26	August 23
September 27	October 26	December 7	

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 25, 2017, 5:00 pm @PAHWF