



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



COMMISSIONERS

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Executive Director

PLANNING COMMISSION

Government Services Center, Suite 270
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MINUTES: Regular Monthly Meeting
Chester County Planning Commission

Hybrid – GSC Suite 351 East
March 13, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Michael Heaberg, Chair; Nate Cline, Vice Chair;
Stephanie Duncan; Frank Furman; Matt Hammond; Andrew Wright.

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: None.

STAFF PRESENT IN PERSON: Brian O'Leary, Executive Director; Carol Stauffer,
Assistant Director; David Blackburn; Carrie Conwell; Bill Deguffroy; Richard Drake; Paul
Fritz; Rachael Griffith; Gene Huller; Nancy Shields; Brian Styche.

STAFF PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Glenn Bentley; Chris Bittle; Steve Buck; Beth Cunliffe;
Gwen Duli; Paul Farkas; Chris Patriarca; Patty Quinn; Elle Steinman; Sally Warren; Diana
Zak.

VISITORS PRESENT IN PERSON: Christina Norland; Brian Donovan; Kyle Coleman.

VISITORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Erin; Graham Pearson.

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular monthly meeting of the Chester County Planning Commission held in person at the Government Services Center Suite 351 East and via Zoom audio/video on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, was called to order at 2:00 P.M. by Chair Michael Heaberg.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Deguffroy introduced the presenters for Planning Kennett Connections (PKC), a VPP funded project: Christina Norland, Square Roots Collective; Brian Donovan, Bowman; and Kyle Coleman, Kennett Square Borough manager. Mr. Coleman reported that the PKC project was also funded by Longwood Gardens and was a partnership between Kennett Square Borough, Kennett Township, and East Marlborough Township to look at the trail system in the three municipalities. Ms. Norland displayed an existing conditions map and reported that a Southern Chester County regional trails committee was formed to help facilitate the trails project. Mr. Donovan noted that the PKC plan was accepted by all three municipalities in 2023. Mr. Donovan went on to summarize the project's vision and goals along with the proposed spine network/bikeway map. Next, Mr. Donovan noted that there are three focus areas and summarized trail improvements within each focus area. Lastly,

Mr. Donovan displayed and summarized a catalyst (priority) projects map. Mr. Donovan and Mr. Coleman summarized the next steps that will be taken to move this project forward.

ACTION ITEMS:

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 14, 2024, MEETING OF THE CHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION WAS MADE BY MR. HAMMOND, SECONDED BY MR. FURMAN, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

Act 247 Reviews:

Subdivision and Land Development Reviews:

There were eighteen (18) Subdivision and Land Development Reviews prepared in February 2024.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EIGHTEEN (18) SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS WAS MADE BY MR. WRIGHT, SECONDED BY MS. DUNCAN, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

Mr. Hammond recused himself from the following applications: LD-01-24-17966; LD-01-24-17965.

Mr. Cline recused himself from the following application: LD-01-24-17969.

Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Amendments, Miscellaneous Reviews:

There were eleven (11) Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Amendment, and Miscellaneous Reviews prepared in February 2024.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ELEVEN (11) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AMENDMENT, AND MISCELLANEOUS REVIEWS WAS MADE BY MR. HAMMOND, SECONDED BY MR. FURMAN, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

Act 537 Reviews:

Ms. Conwell presented the Commission with three (3) minor Act 537 reviews for the month of February 2024.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE THREE (3) MINOR ACT 537 REVIEWS WAS MADE BY MR. HAMMOND, SECONDED BY MR. WRIGHT, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS:

Agricultural Development Council Update:

Mr. O’Leary reported that Ms. Lane has taken a position with the Parks and Preservation department but will be helping to manage the Agriculture Development Council until the end of March. The County Commissioners assessed the role of the ADC within the county and decided the best place for ag economic development will be with the CCEDC’s AgConnect program, who will act as the implementing entity for the ag economic development plan. A new staff member has been assigned to the County Commissioners’ office to assist with ag related communications efforts. A transition process is currently underway to sunset ADC, to secure a contract with CCEDC to provide economic development services, and to see what duties remain for CCPC.

Next, Mr. O’Leary reported that CCPC is continuing with the following: tailored ag zoning letters for municipalities; development of ag related eTools; and the 2024 Farm Guide, which will be available mid-April.

Sustainability Division Update:

Ms. Griffith reported that, working with the Parks and Preservation department, land trusts, and conservancies, the municipal open space outreach is complete. A database of municipal open space policies and opportunities was created. A municipal specific one-page flyer was created from this database. Municipalities central to land trust service areas were invited to individualized open space work sessions. Ms. Griffith and/or the land trusts attended open space meetings for priority municipalities or met with their supervisors. Next steps were summarized to develop a municipal action plan.

Next, Ms. Griffith reported that an HOA survey was conducted for HOA board members and HOA residents. Over 90 percent of both HOA board members and HOA residents indicated that they were interested in adopting sustainability practices. HOA board members were most interested in sustainable landscaping companies, stormwater basin retrofits or improvements, native plant landscaping, and environmentally friendly de-icer/fertilizer/pesticide usage. The HOA residents’ top choices were similar: environmentally friendly de-icer/fertilizer/pesticide usage, native plant landscaping, and sustainable landscaping companies. Ms. Griffith went on to summarize HOA board member barriers and concerns, and HOA residents’ concerns. Eighty percent of residents answered favorably towards having solar power in their communities. The survey also indicated an interest in sustainability education and leadership. As a result, a Sustainability Summit for HOAs is planned for April 30, 2024 at the Chester County Intermediate Unit, Downingtown.

Multimodal Transportation Division Update:

Mr. Styche reported that CCPC is now in charge of new circuit trail development within the county. The following four projects were handed down from facilities: P&T Corridor – CVT extension to Downingtown; CVT IVa – CVT extension to the Oaklands Corporate Center; CVT West – Enola Low Grade trail extension into Atglen Borough; and the Struble trail extension to Marsh Creek State Park.

Next, Mr. Styche reported that the CVT project status webpage is live and summarized the webpage located here: <https://www.chescoplanning.org/transportation/cvt-ProjectStatus.cfm>.

Lastly, Mr. Styche reported that the county will apply for funding from the DCNR C2P2 program for the following two projects: Phase two design of the Downingtown trestle rehabilitation - developing the CVT within the P&T corridor; and the Boot Road trailhead – acquiring three parcels.

Design and Technology Division Update:

Mr. Fritz noted that the number of development reviews increased for the month of February.

Mr. O’Leary and Mr. Fritz summarized the Village Preservation Guide and noted that the guide is posted on the CCPC website here: <https://www.chescoplanning.org/Historic/Guides.cfm>. The Village Preservation Guide implements the *Landscapes3* Appreciate goal to help preserve the county’s 80 villages. The guide is divided into three chapters: existing conditions for hamlets, traditional villages, and growth area villages; planning for villages including village identification, village character analysis, planning for future land use, planning for preservation, and planning for improvements; and village design including building character, site amenities, and transportation.

Community Planning Division Update:

Mr. Deguffroy noted that the following VPP projects have been completed: Oxford Borough Comprehensive Plan, Upper Uwchlan Township Active Transportation Plan, and Valley Township West Lincoln Highway Corridor Master Plan.

Mr. Deguffroy noted the following 2024 VPP grant round 1 dates coming up: March 22 – grant applications due by 4pm and May 8 – grant awards announced.

Next, Mr. Deguffroy introduced Elise Davis, the newest CPD community planner.

Ms. Horwitz gave an update on the 2023 Non-Residential Construction Report which is live on the CCPC website here: <https://www.chescoplanning.org/LandUse/NonResConstruction-23.cfm>. Nearmap imagery was used to confirm non-residential newly built and additions. Some of the main takeaways include: the new square feet decreased; there were more projects; and commercial and institutional were the highest square footage amounts. The municipalities with the highest square feet from 2016-2023 include Tredyffrin, East Whiteland, and West Goshen. Some of the major projects from 2023 include Kaolin Re Holding Corporation mushroom operation, Elk Township and Great Valley School District New 5/6 Grades Center, East Whiteland Township.

Director's Report:

Mr. O'Leary reported that last month's Heritage Tourism Plan public meeting went well and Commissioner adoption is anticipated in April; SRPRA's contract with the federal government regarding rail service returning to Phoenixville, Pottstown, and Reading is up and running; and the Historic Preservation Network will be having a leadership luncheon with CCPC support on March 23.

ADJOURNMENT

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, A MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 3:37 PM WAS MADE BY MR. HAMMOND, SECONDED BY MR. CLINE, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian N. O'Leary". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and 'O'.

Brian N. O'Leary, AICP
Secretary

BNO/ncs