

**PENNS VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 21, 2016**

**PRESENT:**

**Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission**

Centre Hall	
Gregg Township	Doug Bierly
Haines Township	Charlie Valentine
Miles Township	Ron Hough
Millheim Borough	Sharon Heckman
Penn Township	Bob Fox
Potter Township	Ron Grove

**Other:**

Penns Valley Area School District	Dr. Brian Griffith, Superintendent Robert Miller, Director of Physical Plant BT Schwier, Board Member
Citizen	Tom Heckman
Centre County Planning and Community Development Office	Linda Marshall

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Grove called the November 21, 2016 meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES**

Mr. Grove called for additions or corrections to the September 19, 2016 meeting notes of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Heckman corrected the third sentence in the first paragraph on Page 7 to read, "He noted that ~~Penn Street~~ *one block east and west of the traffic signal* can accommodate parking on both sides but parking in front of Elk Creek and the Bank needs to be removed to avoid turning movement conflicts." Mr. Hough moved to approve the September 19, 2016 Meeting Notes as corrected. Ms. Heckman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Treasurer Report**

Mr. Bierly read the Treasurer's Report. He reported that there is a balance of \$290.46 in the Treasury with the only expenditure being the legal ad for the September 19, 2016 Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission meeting, which was \$70.53.

**Secretary Report**

No report.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Penns Valley Area School District's Proposed Facilities Improvement Project**

Mr. Miller introduced Dr. Griffin and Mr. Schwier. He noted that Mr. Schwier had served as chair of the District's Facilities Committee.

Mr. Miller stated that in 2015 the School Board's Facilities Committee began discussing current and future projects as part of the Facilities Five Year Plan review. The Committee identified several areas involving the high school infrastructure that needed to be addressed, which include: failing window and lentils, environmental upgrades, safety issues within the auditorium, concerns with the design of the high school office, etc.

Mr. Miller continued by stating that the School Board decided at its April 2015 work session to hold a public meeting to seek community input on how the physical design of the districts buildings may or may not need to change to better deliver educational programming today and in the future. The public meeting was held on April 29, 2015 and input was received at the meeting as well as written comments were solicited through the District's website.

During the summer of 2015, Mr. Miller stated that the groups of administrators and board members toured facilities throughout the state to view both new and renovated auditoriums, classrooms, gymnasiums, innovative classroom space and office locations/layouts/public access, etc.

The Master Planning process began in September 2015, and Mr. Miller noted that key areas were identified to be considered in a proposed renovation at the high school. The areas included were: auditorium, cafeteria, classrooms, library, active learning centers, main office/guidance/nurse's suites, current gymnasium, and proposed new gymnasium.

In January 2016, KCBA was hired as the architectural firm to prepare schematic designs for the Master Planning process. Input on the schematic designs was obtained through a series of public meeting, three Master Planning Open houses and an online survey.

Mr. Miller stated that in May 2016 the school board authorized the district to enter into a contract with KCBA Architects to provide the first phase of architectural services to design the proposed additions and renovations to the high school and approved the administration to move forward with submitting PlanCon A.

### ***(School Constructions and Facilities (PlanCon))***

#### ***Overview***

*When a school district undertakes a major school construction project and seeks reimbursement from the Commonwealth, a process known as PlanCon is initiated. PlanCon, an acronym for Planning and Construction Workbook, is a set of forms and procedures used to apply for Commonwealth reimbursement. The forms are designed to:*

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*(1) document a local school district's planning process; (2) provide justification for a project to the public; (3) ascertain compliance with state laws, regulations and standards; and (4) establish the level of state participation in the cost of the project.*

*The Division of School Facilities in the Department of Education reviews proposed school building projects including their plans and specifications, enrollments, building utilization and building condition. The Division also calculates state reimbursement for qualified school construction projects, and reviews and approves the financing for reimbursable projects.*

*The Division is also responsible for approving reimbursement for charter school facility leases.*

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/School%20Construction%20and%20Facilities/Pages/default.aspx#tab-1>

Mr. Miller shared with the Commission Members the construction design drawing, and he noted that the School District has received approval from the PA Department of Education for a \$3 million reimbursement through PlanCon.

Mr. Miller explained that the construction costs are \$14 million with an additional \$3 million in soft costs. Dr. Griffith commented that at the meeting the District did not know if they would have PlanCon funding available to them. The District submitted an application for PlanCon funding by the deadline, but they were not sure how the state would provide reimbursements. Dr. Griffith added that the District is now looking at financing bonds for upfront financing.

Mr. Hough asked what kind of energy is used in the building. Mr. Miller replied that they use a remote chiller. He added that the District has its own well. He stated that that P-Tac units are getting much better and that there are multiple ERVs on the roof. Using the water source heat pump, the heat will be more efficient, and it is similar to what the District uses in the elementary school.

Mr. Grove asked if this project will affect the school taxes. Mr. Griffith replied that the project should not have any effect on the taxes. He added that they will float bonds to keep debt service the same and that the debt should be eliminated in 14.5 years.

Mr. Hough asked if employee retirement will affect this project. Mr. Griffith replied that there was an 4% annual growth in retirement each year and now it is coming down to 2% and should be leveling off. He noted that pensions are in excess of 30% of the payroll.

Mr. Hough asked Dr. Griffith if the District has done any studies on the number of students projected over the next 10 to 20 years. Dr. Griffith replied that the projections are flat. They are seeing growth in school age children; however, they are not seeing an increase in school enrollment due to the number of Amish children.

Mr. Grove commented that when he was in high school there were 900 students and now there are 600-700. He asked why the District needs more space if we don't have more students.

Dr. Griffith replied that there is an increase in sports activities, and he used as an example out of season soccer, which is now using the facilities. He further explained that students are getting more involved.

Mr. Bierly added to Dr. Griffith's comment by stating that the utilization of the Old Gregg School Community Center's gymnasium space has increased by 1/3.

Ms. Heckman asked as to the percentage of homeschoolers that participate in the sporting events. Dr. Griffith replied that there are about 60 kids in the District who are homeschooled. He added that most charter schools don't offer sports and that the students are welcome to participate in the District's sports activities.

Mr. Hough asked Dr. Griffith if the District is busing students to the Miles Township Elementary School. Dr. Griffith responded by stated that the District does have open enrollment at that school. Mr. Hough asked what the future of the school is. Dr. Griffith stated that Miles Township Elementary is a viable school. He noted that the most expensive cost for school districts is staffing and as long as they can keep the classes appropriately filled then it is a viable school.

Referring to the new gymnasium to be built in the front of the high school, Ms. Heckman asked as to how the project will affect the new water lines. Mr. Miller replied that the design will not impact the water lines since they are not within the construction zone.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Before the beginning of the meeting, Ms. Marshall had distributed a map of the Centre Hall-Old Fort-Grange Fair-Hanover Foods Priority Targeted Investment Area-Columbia Gap Proposal to the Commission Members and representatives of the Penns Valley Area School District as well as information on the SEDA-COG Natural Gas Cooperative, Inc.

The Agenda was modified to address this proposal.

Ms. Marshall read to those present information provided by Mr. Robert Jacobs, Director of the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office, which was as follows:

*The SEDA-COG Natural Gas Cooperative and Columbia Gas are discussing a proposal to distribute natural gas to portions of Centre Hall Borough and Potter Twp. This proposal is in a very preliminary stage where Columbia has provided rough cost estimates.*

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*The total cost of the project is \$4-4.5 million with \$2.5-3 million of that total covered by Columbia Gas and \$1-2 million covered by Cooperative grants and user contributions (Hanover).*

*Initially, Hanover Foods wanted to extend natural gas to their facility at Old Fort – cost estimates at the time were prohibitive.*

*Recent discussions with Columbia Gas, the Cooperative, and Hanover have resulted in the current proposal.*

*If discussions continue and grant funding becomes available, the project may start in 2018.*

*County and SEDA-COG staff met with Centre Hall Borough on November 10 and Potter Twp. on November 14.*

*County staff will provide the PVRPC with updates when available.*

The consensus was that this was a good project that should be supported.

### **2017 Proposed PVRPC Meeting Schedule**

Ms. Marshall referred to the proposed 2017 Meeting Schedule and asked if the Commission members wanted to consider adding another meeting due to the number of work items that the Commission will be addressing.

Ms. Heckman commented that adding a meeting in July might result in low attendance, and she recommended a meeting in April as an alternative. The Commission members concurred with Ms. Heckman.

Mr. Hough moved to approve the 2017 Meeting Schedule with the addition of the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Bierly seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **PVRPC Representatives**

Ms. Marshall informed the Commission members that she will be notifying the municipal secretaries in December of the expired terms and vacant position so that re-appointments/appointments are added to the 2017 Re-Organization Meeting Agenda.

### **REPORTS**

#### **Centre Hall**

No representative was present.

#### **Gregg Township**

No report

**Haines Township**

Mr. Valentine reported that everything is on an even keel.

**Miles Township**

Mr. Hough reported that everything is the same.

**Millheim Borough**

Ms. Heckman reported that the Borough removed nine parking spaces as required by the PA Department of Transportation. She added that the Borough will be putting together an engineering study for the alleys.

Ms. Marshall asked if the Borough has received input from the businesses and residents on the changes to the parking in the business district. Ms. Heckman replied that some of the residents are concerned about the increased speeds.

Mr. Grove asked if the police are enforcing the speed limit. Ms. Heckman explained that police services are limited due to the geographic area that the PA State Police has to serve and that enforcement is not as effective due to word-of-mouth notifications of the enforcement taking place in Millheim Borough.

**Penn Township**

Mr. Fox report that the Township has applied for a grant for a water line project. He also noted that Mr. LeRoy Young was appointed to the Board of Supervisors, replacing Mr. Dean Smith.

**Potter Township**

Mr. Grove reported that the Planning Commission is still working on changing the zoning for the Rural Residential District.

He also stated that some of the Township's residents are upset about the Sewage Management District regulations due to the \$50 penalty.

Mr. Hough stated that he had attended the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant training and commented that it was interesting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**-Tri-Municipal Park and Recreation Committee Report**

Mr. Bierly reported that the Park Committee is moving forward with hiring Mr. Glenn Vernon and Mr. Brian Auman to conduct an initial park study. He added that the Committee is also working on a lease with Verizon for the cell tower.

Referring to the Advisory Committee's September 20, 2016 Meeting Notes, Ms. Marshall added to Mr. Bierly's by reporting:

-The Committee will have a possible PennVest Grant update.

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- Information is being garnered from Potter Township's insurance agent about hunting on the property.
- Municipalities are awaiting a corrected contract on a Line of Credit.
- The park's walking paths have been mowed and that a suggestion was made to mow the paths once a month in 2017 from May through September.

**-Regional Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

Ms. Marshall asked the Commission members to continue their discussion from the May 16, 2016 Regional Planning Commission meeting by identifying goals that should be considered for either their municipality or on a region-wide basis for the update of the regional comprehensive plan.

The consensus was that the expansion of high speed internet is a priority for the municipalities present at the meeting.

Mr. Fox listed the following for Penn Township:

- Wellhead Protection
- Dry Hydrants and Fire Protection
- Consider establishing an on lot Sewage Management District

Ms. Heckman reiterated the recommended partnership with the Penns Valley Conservation Association on the development of a walking trail in the Borough of Millheim.

Mr. Bierly listed the following for Gregg Township:

- Economic Development
- High speed internet
- Rail to Trail project for the Village of Spring Mills

Mr. Fox also mentioned that inexpensive energy should be a priority, lending Penn Township's support to the Centre Hall-Potter natural gas proposed project. Other representatives concurred with Mr. Fox's support of the proposed project.

A discussion occurred on ways to assist the fire companies. One suggestion made by Mr. BT Schwier is whether or not there would be a reduction in costs for Workers Compensation insurance if the insurance coverage was pooled at a regional level.

In regard to high speed internet, Dr. Griffith commented that the District is using Windstream as its internet provider. He remarked on the benefits of having high speed internet access in the community such as fostering economic development, enabling residents to work from home, and having the ability to hold electronic meetings.

Based on the importance of the issues discussed, the members decided to schedule a meeting with their legislative representatives in March to bring their concerns on high speed internet and other matters to the legislators' attention. Mr. Valentine moved to

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schedule the meeting with the respective legislators in March 2017, and Mr. Heckman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**INFORMATION ITEMS Cont'd**

**CCMPO (Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization) Update**

Ms. Marshall reviewed the written update provided by Mr. Mike Bloom on behalf of the CCMPO.

Since Ms. Heckman had covered the Millheim Parking report, Ms. Marshall did not revisit that information as noted on the update report.

**Regional Signage Grant**

Ms. Marshall noted that the Commission had discussed the possibility of a regional grant to address the replacement of signs identified as outdated through each respective reflectivity inventory. The regional approach was suggested by Ms. Sue Wenrick, Haines Township Secretary/Treasurer.

Ms. Marshall informed the Commission that neither the County Planning Office nor the MPO are able to serve as the single applicant or administrator of the grant for this type of effort. However, staff will be able to assist in identifying an applicant, preparing a grant application or offering technical assistance, if a grant is pursued.

**SR (State Route) 45 Bridge-Woodward, Haines Township**

Ms. Marshall stated that CCMPO staff is not aware of any scheduled meetings with local officials and the public regarding the Rapid Bridge Replacement projects in Haines Township, including the SR 45 Bridge at Woodward. MPO staff will be reaching out to Plenary Walsh in early December for an update about scheduling these meetings, and about any updates regarding the project schedules.

Mr. Heckman stated that he was on the consultant's website and noted that the Bower Hollow Road Bridge is scheduled to be replaced in 2017; however, the SR 45 Bridge is now scheduled for 2018.

**FOR GOOD OF THE ORDER**

**No items were mentioned.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Mr. Fox moved to adjourn the November 21, 2016 meeting of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission at 9:14 p.m. Ms. Heckman seconded the motion. The motion carried.