

# **MINUTES**

## **WASHINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**October 4, 2023**

**Members Present:**

Mr. William Kiehl  
Dr. Leslie P. Midla  
Mr. Kenneth Kulak AIA  
Mr. William Minor

**Staff:**

Mr. Vincent P. Ley, P.E.  
Mr. Jason Theakston  
Mr. Austin F. McDaniel

The October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting of the Washington County Planning Commission Board Members was held at Washington County Planning Commission Conference Room, 100 West Beau Street, Suite 707, Washington, Pennsylvania 15301.

In the absence of the designated Chairman and Vice Chairman, Dr. Midla was voted to fill the role of Chairman for the October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Washington County Planning Commission Board Meeting.

Dr. Midla called the meeting to order at 4:40 pm.,

### **MINUTES**

A motion to approve the February 1<sup>st</sup>, June 7<sup>th</sup>, and August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, minutes, as presented.

The first motion was made by Mr. Kiehl and seconded by Mr. Kulak AIA.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## OLD BUSINESS

### 1. Comprehensive Plan -

Mr. McDaniel informed the Board that the County Comprehensive Plan was forwarded to the Washington County Commissioners for adoption. The Washington County Commissioners held a Public Hearing on September 21, 2023, at 1:00 pm in which two attendees spoke about the proposed Comprehensive Plan. The Commissioners adopted the plan at the regularly scheduled meeting on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. A closeout award letter was provided for the MAP grant and the resolution was signed on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. Mackin Engineering will provide the remaining deliverables.

### 2. Park Updates -

#### a. Cross Creek Trail

Mr. Ley explained that the Cross Creek Trail was complete and a final walk through was scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The contract was awarded to Raffle Construction, \$1,170,370.00. A discussion was had regarding handicap accessible and special hunts, as well as permitted and non-permitted hunting areas.

#### b. Mingo Road and Mansion Hill Road -

Mr. Ley explained that the contract was awarded to Morgan Excavating, \$486,765.00. A change order was executed in the amount of \$52,874 to reconstruct the Mingo and Mansion Hill intersection.

Mr. Minor questioned whether the restrooms were "double doors" and Dr. Midla asked a question regarding restroom distances in proximity to active park

areas. A discussion ensued regarding restroom costs and strategic placement.

**c. Thompson Hill Shelter Project-**

Mr. Ley informed the Board that a contract had been awarded to A. Liberoni, \$2,072,924.58 for earthwork and drainage features on the Thompson Hill side of Cross Creek Park. Mr. Ley explained that this was specifically for the earthwork and not pavilions. Mr. Ley also discussed a dock project at Cross Creek.

Dr. Midla made the recommendation to look for outside funding for shelters at the discussed location and a discussion was had regarding dock handicap accessibility.

**d. Mingo Creek Park Office-**

Mr. Ley had explained that the work was continuing at the old park office for new shelters and mentioned that the parking lot is to be completed in October.

**e. Thompson Hill Pavilion Area**

Mr. Ley had explained that concrete restrooms (2) are to be purchased and to be approved at the October Board of Commissioners meeting.

**3. Bridge Updates -**

**a. Chartiers Creek Bridge No. 64 -**

Mr. Ley informed the Board that Gibson-Thomas Engineering, Inc. was awarded, \$ 494,502.49 and preliminary design has started.

**b. National Pike Trail Tunnel #4 -**

Mr. Ley explained that the details are being worked out for design development

of NPT Tunnel #4 and Mr. Ley met with the consultant and PennDOT virtually on September 19, 2023.

**c. Raccoon Creek Bridge No. 23 -**

Mr. Ley informed the Board of the proposal for \$620,487.90 for design costs, which is to be submitted for County approval at the October Board of Commissioners meeting.

The Board questioned the costs associated with the designs of the presented bridges and Mr. Ley relayed information regarding programming at the State level. A discussion was had regarding federal, state and local cost share.

**d. Chartiers Creek Bridge No. 53 -**

Mr. Ley explained the bridge was completed in August 2023 and opened to traffic.

**e. Chartiers Creek Bridge No. 58 -**

Mr. Ley gave a status update that the bridge is in construction with an opening date of November 2023.

**f. Chartiers Creek Bridge No. 30 -**

Mr. Ley provided a status update that the bridge is in construction with an opening date of mid-October.

**g. Bi-annual NBIS Inspections -**

Inspections are continuing with Dawood Engineering, Inc, for the 2023 calendar year.

Mr. Kulak raised concerns regarding the West Pike Run Bridge No. 1 located in Coal

Center. A discussion was had regarding urgency of the bridge and the ability for ingress and egress to Coal Center. The trains that bi-sect the town and emergency services, such as ambulance responses, were discussed. Mr. Kulak recommended looking into combined contracts for bridge designs to reduce costs.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Parks Master Site Plan Update -**

Mr. Theakston informed the Board that Herbert, Rowland and Grubic, Inc. was awarded the contract for the Parks Master Plan in the amount of \$ 81,640.00. Mr. Theakston explained that the plan will be used to direct development in parks, including amenities, structures and security detail.

Dr. Midla wanted an emphasis on programming in the plan and Mr. Minor questioned who the visionaries and stakeholders of the plan are. Mr. Kulak explained that stakeholders, such as public entities, are involved and Dr. Midla informed the Board that the Game Commission/Fish and Boat were involved in the last updates. Mr. Minor emphasized the need to include a lesson(s) learned section in the update. A discussion was had regarding consistency between the Greenways Plan and the Parks Master Plan.

### **2. Tenaska Proposal -**

Mr. Theakston explained that staff met with Commissioners on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, for the attached proposal by Tenaska. Mr. Theakston explained that the company is based out of Omaha, Nebraska, and that they are proposing to install a carbon capture and storage well adjacent to existing well pad in Cross Creek Park. Mr. Theakston explained that it was a 30-year lease on the pad and the project would pay out an

average \$ 129,000 per year over term. Staff in the meeting questioned safety, access to site, agreements with Range Resources/Markwest to use access road, and public perception, as well as safety and impacts on environment. A decision on the project is tabled for the future.

A discussion ensued regarding the process of Carbon Capture and how fracking can coincide with carbon capture. Mr. Theakston and Mr. Minor explained the processes involved.

Dr. Midla recommended looking into how much energy it takes to collect carbon. Dr. Midla and Mr. Minor recommended looking into bonds for security/remediation purposes. Mr. Minor recommended seeing if the price included is enough as Tenaska will be collecting a percentage or "rent" from the companies using the system. Mr. Minor recommended to ensure that businesses in Washington benefit more than the surrounding counties piping in carbon.

### **3. Washington County Conservation District Board of Directors Nominate -**

Mr. McDaniel explained that the Washington County Planning Commission is an approved nominating entity for the Washington County Conservation District's Board Members. Two vacancies exist for the beginning of 2024. A discussion was had regarding the active board members seeking to fill their open seat.

A motion to forward the names of Michael Lusk and Jose Taracido to the Conservation District was made by Mr. Minor and seconded by Mr. Kiehl.

#### 4. Special Projects and Agenda Items - August and September -

Mr. Theakston discussed the various special projects and meetings in August and September.

#### SUBDIVISIONS

A motion to approve the subdivisions from February until September was made by Mr. Minor and seconded by Mr. Kiehl. Mr. Kulak abstained from voting.

#### OTHER

Mr. Kulak explained the Food Helpers Project to Board and recommended the Planning Commission help, in future upcoming funding, inclusion in planning efforts, etc.

Mr. Minor discussed any grant information regarding the leveling of the Fairgrounds to relocate some amenities. Mr. Theakston noted that question to follow up. Mr. Minor also inquired about the information flow from the Washington County Authority regarding Broadband coverage and progress in the County and also the electrification needs for businesses, specifically for Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations. This led the discussion to discussing the process of regulation and relocation to accommodate those areas.

Dr. Midla suggested utilizing the Local Share Account program for electrical infrastructure extension for EV charging sites, as well as to foster a competitive advantage over other countries to attract new business.

Next meeting - December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Mr. Minor requested a virtual/dial-in option to attend upcoming meetings, as he may not be able to attend in person due to military service.

Mr. McDaniel informed the Board that there was a previous mistake in the Washington County

Planning Commission Board's Terms. Three board members are scheduled to come off in December 2024 and the Bylaws state that only two can come off in one year. Dr. Midla recommended going through previous minutes to find where the mistake was.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Midla adjourned the meeting at 6:18, thanking everyone for their participation.