



**Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)**

Board of Director's Meeting  
Wednesday, December 29, 2021  
Virtual Meeting

**Members:** K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), L. Kelleher (Reading), L. Olsen (County), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp.), J. Oswald (Lower Alsace Twp.), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Reading) – all virtually

**Members absent:** B. Petrov (Mt. Penn), D. Barth (Alsace Twp), T. Goodman (Mt. Penn); K. Barnhardt (County)

**Others attending:** A. Showers, M. Brophy, L. Kissinger, S. Rugis, F. Denbowski, R. Rock, K. Smoker(Reading Eagle) - all virtually

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Olsen called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. Due to COVID-19, the MP3 is meeting being held in a virtual format. He stated that until further notice the meetings will remain virtual due to some technical issues with using the mixed hybrid format. Public comment is invited in writing, via email, or through registration via Zoom.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Olsen inquired if Ms. Kelleher received any written public comment. Ms. Kelleher replied in the negative. He asked if members of the public present wished to comment and asked them to use the Zoom raised hand feature. No one responded.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Olsen asked the members to consider the minutes from the September meeting and the agenda for this meeting. No modifications were made and the minutes and agenda were approved by acclimation.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Ms. Mallatratt, MP3 COG Treasurer, stated that the MP3 has a balance of \$32,369.72 including a \$163.08 refund from Knight's Rental. She reported that there are no outstanding bills to pay. She stated that the balance in the Berks County Community Foundation (BCCF) is \$9,078.69. She added that she will prepare the annual dues invoices and distribute them electronically.

**The Treasurer's Report was approved on motion by Ms. Kelleher, second by Mr. Oswald and approved unanimously.**

### **MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

Mr. Olsen stated that to accommodate Mr. Rugis' schedule we will go out of agenda order.

#### **B. Traffic Shift at the Pagoda Parking Lot**

Mr. Rugis stated that the traffic shift project has been successfully completed. He noted that the project allowed additional ADA parking spaces, a bike rack and redirecting the storm water to the Duryea Drive area which will resolve erosion problems.

Mr. Rugis explained that the next steps are improvements to the lighting and mechanicals, determining the building's usage. An RFP for this study is being let.

#### **D. Pagoda Trail Update**

Mr. Rugis stated that he had McCormack Taylor review this plan and the terrain. The repaving cost for Penn Street from North 4<sup>th</sup> Street to North 11<sup>th</sup> Street will be covered by the City's Liquid Fuels funding, which will include the addition of an ADA crossing at 11<sup>th</sup> Street to support the trail project. At the North 14<sup>th</sup> Street trailhead an additional ADA crossing will be added along with a rest area and a tree canopy. He suggested that the group consider installing the signage. The work will begin in the spring of 2022 and will last for approximately six (6) months.

Mr. Olsen stated that the DoubleTree will provide volunteers to assist with the placement of the signs. Ms. Showers noted that the location of the signs has not been determined. Mr. Kissinger suggested using existing poles and adding poles where needed to avoid placing signs on trees. Mr. Rugis expressed the belief that the Public Works staff can install the signage.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about the process to name a trail and to authorize the installation of signs. Mr. Rugis and Mr. Kissinger noted that the trail already exists and they expressed the belief that the Administration supports this project and can authorize the installation of the signage.

Mr. Rugis suggested undertaking the improvements to the North 14<sup>th</sup> Street trailhead first and adding the signage from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to the Pagoda. The signs From North 11<sup>th</sup> west can occur when the paving project is completed.

Mr. Denbowski noted the need for the City's Risk and Safety Coordinator to review the trail and the plan, as these improvements may increase the use of the trail and increase the City's liability, requiring change to the City's insurance coverage.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the work on the Pagoda wall will have an impact on the trail. She also noted the need for additional clean-ups on the Pagoda grounds due to the amount of illegal dumping. Mr. Rugis stated that the trailhead at the Pagoda is not in the vicinity of where the wall work will take place. Ms. Showers screen shared a map of the trail showing the separation of the two sites.

Mr. Rugis described the work needed to determine the Pagoda's occupancy and use and to bring the building up to code and ADA compliance. He noted that Mt. Penn is a wonderful gem and he thanked the MP3 for coming together to bring additional attention to this area.

#### **A. Deer Management at Antietam**

Mr. Olsen deferred this update until Mr. Barnhardt is present.

#### **C. Update on Coordinated Approach to Dumping**

The RFP has been completed and is being reviewed by the City's Purchasing Coordinator and Public Works.

#### **D. DCNR Grant Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan**

Ms. Showers stated that she has not heard back from the DCNR. *(Note: Ms. Showers informed the group on December 31<sup>st</sup> that the application was not funded. Approximately 30 planning applications were submitted. She will follow-up with her DCNR contact.)*

#### **E. MP3 Staff Update**

Mr. Olsen stated that the MP3 officers met to discuss the need to add full or part-time staff to help the organization move forward more quickly. Various funding options need to be explored. An update will be provided when there is more to report. The officers are meeting again in a few weeks.

#### **F. New Year's Eve Fireworks re Berks Festivals, Inc.**

Mr. Olsen stated that Bill Koch, caretaker of Berks Festivals, Inc., a non-profit organization that organizes the fireworks productions at the Pagoda, has no interest in stepping away at this point in time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz described the New Year's Eve planned this year, noting that viewing is not permitted on Skyline Drive.

#### **G. Master Plan Initiatives**

Mr. Olsen stated that the MP3 has made the following accomplishments without any staff assistance.

- Completed:** Pagoda Circulation Improvements
- Extend Municipal Policing across the Preserve
- Provide Police with access to the security video at the Pagoda
- MP3 Branding
- Improvements to Pendora Park

- Underway:** Repairs to the Pagoda wall  
Events on the Preserve  
Remove invasive species  
Additional clean-ups  
Trail from City Park to Pagoda

Mr. Olsen suggested reviewing and updating the work plan when Mr. Barnhardt is present.

#### **H. MOUs with preserve based organizations**

Mr. Olsen deferred on this issue until a future meeting

#### **G. Define 2022 Meeting Dates**

Mr. Olsen suggested retaining the current meeting schedule - the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every other month at 6 pm. All present agreed. Ms. Kelleher noted that the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday in November falls on the day before Thanksgiving. She suggested holding the meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of November – November 30<sup>th</sup>. All present agreed.

#### **2022 Meeting dates**

<b>January 26, 2022</b>	<b>March 23, 2022</b>
<b>May 25, 2022</b>	<b>July 27, 2022</b>
<b>September 28, 2022</b>	<b>November 30, 2022</b>

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS – submission in written form only**

- Finance & Capital – no report
- Promotions & Marketing – see attached report
- Public Safety & Public Services – Pagoda road work completed & dumping RFP being reviewed
- Environmental & Land Use Committees – report attached

Mr. Rock noted the Skyline and Duryea Drive clean-ups scheduled for April 23rd

#### **Other Business**

Mr. Olsen stated that Ms. Mallatratt was appointed to a vacated Alsace Township Supervisor seat. He congratulated her and expressed hope that she would retain the Treasurer role. Ms. Mallatratt stated that she will stay on as Treasurer.

#### **Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Olsen adjourned the meeting at approximately 7 pm.**

**The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be held virtually on January 26, 2022 at 6 pm.**

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary*

### **Action Items:**

1. Linda to finalize the RFP re Dumping and send out through City Purchasing office to Penn Bid
2. 501c3 application – does the MP3 need this designation or are we exempt as a governmental organization
3. Executing the RMF Grant Agreement and filing the required report
4. Review Master Plan initiatives and define work plan
5. MP3 staffing – MP3 officers & County Planning staff explore options
6. Update on Pagoda Trail – start at 14<sup>th</sup> and Walnut