



Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

Members: –K. Barnhardt (County), J. Moore (Alsace Twp), L. Kelleher (Reading), L. Olsen (County), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Reading) – in person

Members absent: B. Petrov (Mt. Penn), T. Goodman (Mt. Penn), J. Oswald (Lower Alsace Twp.), K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp.)

Others attending: L Kissinger – virtually and R. Rock – in person

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. He noted that a quorum is present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Barnhardt opened the floor for public comment. No one present stepped forward to speak and the public comment period was closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Moore presented the Treasurer's Report - the MP3 bank account has a balance of \$49,687.07 after the deposit of \$2,125 from JazzFest ticket sales.

Mr. Barnhardt asked for a motion to ratify the payment of a bill for the purchase of marketing postcards for the BluesFest.

Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, to ratify the payment of \$79.76 for the purchase of the marketing postcards for the BluesFest.

The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously on motion of Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and a second by Mr. Olsen.

MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Modification of MP3 Agreement re Membership Amendment via Resolution to allow elected officials to select a non-elected representative and replacing “executive committee” to “board”. Reading and Berks have adopted the modification.

Ms. Kelleher stated that Lower Alsace approved the modification and will forward the executed document.

Mr. Barnhardt noted that the document was now approved by all participating municipalities.

B. Natural Lands Stewardship Plan and Trails Feasibility Study

Mr. Kissinger stated that there have been site visits with the Natural Lands team and the study is progressing. He stated that there will be some public meetings scheduled in the upcoming months and the report is expected in the vicinity of April 2024.

C. Closure of Skyline – Duryea Dr to List Road

Ms. Kelleher stated that a meeting was held to discuss this issue with representatives from the three (3) municipalities, the Reading and Central Berks Police Chiefs, Public Works and the Managing Director. After considering past actions and pros/cons, the group collectively decided to move forward with a traffic study to determine the cost and liability issues that the closure would create. The managing director stated that the City will complete this task. The information should be available in September.

Mr. Kissinger stated that the Acting Public Works Director would like Lower Alsace to pay for the cost of the study in their area of Skyline Drive. Ms. Kelleher stated that that is contrary to what was stated at the meeting, and she noted that Lower Alsace would be expected to cover the cost of the resulting project, if it moves forward. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed.

Mr. Olsen questioned if the study would be bid out. Mr. Kissinger stated that it probably would; however, the City is going to stop using PennBid and start advertising on the City’s website through a new Intergov program. He explained the benefits.

Ms. Kelleher noted that the City’s 2023 budget includes a Traffic Engineer and she inquired if the City has started working to fill that position. Mr. Kissinger stated that he does not know if that work has started.

Mr. Olsen stated that as he and his firm would not be bidding on that project, he would be willing to assist in the preparation of the RFP.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that the City is exploring the installation of guardrails to separate the bike lane from the traffic lane on Skyline, which would make dumping much more difficult. The guardrails will also close the overlooks to traffic.

Ms. Kelleher stated that Mr. Anspach covered that topic at the meeting to discuss the closure of Skyline. She stated that a report on that topic will occur at the September 27th MP3 meeting.

Mr. Barnhardt inquired if charges were filed against any of those who are dumping on Skyline Drive.

Mr. Kissinger stated that charges are filed whenever possible. He noted that most of the debris is coming from apartment clean-outs. Charges were filed on a person vandalizing City property on Skyline. He noted that the charges made this person double down and cause even more damage. He described the City's response.

Mr. Kissinger stated that the Police Department has been very helpful, but the MDJs are sometimes unwilling to find the party charged guilty.

D. Installation of EV Stations

Ms. Kelleher stated that at the last meeting the MP3 noted the need to determine the location of the stations and how they would be powered.

Mr. Kissinger stated that the Sustainability Manager will be reaching out to schedule a presentation.

E. Update Meeting with Preserve Partners - framework

No update.

F. Events

- **Pagoda Fest**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she requested information about this event in early June and mid-July and she received no response. She also stated that she checked Facebook and the post said that details are coming but no other posts could be located.

Mr. Kissinger stated that he is the supervisor assigned to this August 5th event. He stated that event permits were issued. There will be shuttle services from City Park and Egelman's Park. There will be vendors and two stages in the Pagoda area and the road will be closed on the northern and southern ends.

Mr. Olsen noted that he recently learned that Dave Kline is working with Ms. Kelleher on a citizens bike race on Mt. Penn on August 27th, with permits issued by the City and Lower Alsace.

- **COG Events**

Mr. Olsen stated that the following events are planned for the upcoming year:

- Blues Fest in the fall of 2023 @ the Liederkrantz in coordination w/ Berks Arts
- Jazz event in March 2024 @ Liederkrantz in coordination w/ Berks Arts
- Bluegrass event @ Fire Tower – summer 2024
- Salsa event @ the City Park Band Shell - summer 2024
- Blues event @ Liederkrantz – fall 2024

Mr. Olsen stated that he is working with the Traffic Office on the required event permits, where applicable. He stated that a full year sponsor package will be offered. In addition, the COG will partner with Pagoda-Skyline's chicken barbeque and the Mt. Penn Wheelman Race organized by Dave Kline Productions. Mr. Kline plans on making this race an annual event on Mt. Penn.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the repair work to the Pagoda may disrupt traffic. Ms. Kelleher agreed, noting that Mr. Anspach is making a presentation on the repair work to City Council at the August 7th Strategic Planning session.

Mr. Rock noted some past events, including the Big Drop on Duryea Drive organized by Red Bull around 2012. He suggested exploring the restart of those events.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS – submission in written form only

- Finance & Capital
- Promotions & Marketing
- Public Safety & Public Services
- Environmental & Land Use Committees

WRITTEN REPORTS FROM PRESERVE STAKEHOLDERS

None received.

Other Business

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the Pagoda Foundation is working on a wrap on the history of the Pagoda for the 3rd floor porch area of the Pagoda which will be tied to the Foundation's website.

Public Comment

Mr. Rock noted the upcoming 75th annual Hill Climb on August 19th and 20th. He suggested that the City consider repaving Duryea Drive and adjoining roads.

Ms. Kelleher stated that there is a paving schedule, and that Angora Road is scheduled for 2023.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 27th at 6 pm at the Lower Alsace Township Building.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45 pm on motion of Mr. Olsen and Mr. Moore, respectively.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary

Action Items:

1. Lester & Larry - Update from Stewardship Plan Work Group at the July meeting
2. Linda – follow-up with Sustainability Mgr re EV Stations
3. Linda – check on Mt Penn area road paving schedule
4. City – Traffic Study on the closure of Skyline Dr.