



COUNTY OF ERIE

Erie County Planning Commission

Erie County Courthouse
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Gerry Dahl
Chairman

Jan Cornwell
Vice-Chairman

**ERIE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

April 14, 2011

A meeting of the Erie County Planning Commission was held at 6:30 PM on Thursday, April 14, 2011 in the Admiral Room at the Raymond M. Blasco Memorial Library, 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA.

Those in attendance were:

ECPC members:	Representing:
Gerry Dahl	Corry City (Chair, Exec. Board)
Jan Cornwell	Erie County (Vice Chair, Exec. Board)
Carol Loll	County Council (Exec. Board)
Charles Casey	Erie City (Exec. Board)
Paul Pangratz	Girard Twp (Exec. Board)
Joe Legnasky	Lake City Boro (Exec. Board)
Edward Williams	Erie City
Jim Cardman	Fairview Twp
Jack Pfadt	Venango Twp
Flory Kondzielski	Waterford Twp
Peter Nye	Wesleyville Borough
Planning Department Staff:	
John McGranor	
Matthew Puz	
Guests:	

Executive Board members present – 6 of 9; quorum attained

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Gerry Dahl called the meeting to order and the pledge of allegiance was given.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

None.

APPROVAL OF March 10, 2011 MINUTES

A motion was made by Jan Cornwell and seconded by Charles Casey to approve the minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

ECDP Monthly Activity Report

Gerry Dahl indicated that the Erie County Department of Planning's Monthly Activity Report was attached to the meeting agenda, and asked if anyone had any additional information to add.

John McGranor stated that the Erie County Agricultural Land Preservation Board has made significant progress towards the preservation of three more farms in Erie County. The State Board is expected to approve agricultural conservation easement purchases for these 3 farms at its April 21, 2011 meeting.

John also indicated that Greene Township is currently in the process of considering the adoption of an Agricultural Security Area. If the Township adopts the ASA, the area will consist of approximately 936 acres.

Matthew Puz reminded everyone that the County is currently accepting applications for its Act 137, Affordable Housing Program. The deadline for application submittals is April 25, 2011. Program funding available is approximately \$120,000 to \$130,000.

Recycling was also discussed. It was noted that the recycling containers at the Waterford location are constantly overflowing. It was recognized that there are numerous containers available at this site, and that Waste Management appears to be making an effort to pick up materials in a timely manner. It was acknowledged that the overflowing containers simply appear to be the result of a high level of citizen participation in recycling, and that this could be considered to be a positive thing.

Jim Cardman indicated that Fairview Township will be holding a "Recycling Day" for its residents on May 14, 2011, at its Township building.

OLD BUSINESS

Erie County Stormwater Management Plan

John McGranor provided an update on the Stormwater Management Plan, which was approved by PA DEP on March 25th. DEP will notify each municipality of its approval of the Plan. At that time, it is expected that DEP will establish September 21, 2011 as the deadline by which all municipalities will be required to adopt a stormwater management ordinance that is consistent with the plan. John clarified that the County fulfilled its responsibilities under Act 167 by adopting the Plan. The County is not responsible for ensuring that municipalities adopt ordinances. This issue is between DEP and the individual municipalities. It is John's understanding that the County is not required to review these municipal ordinances. Additionally, it appears that DEP will not be formally reviewing these ordinances, but will only need a statement and some minimal documentation from the municipalities verifying that a municipal ordinance has been adopted. The County Plan, the model ordinance, and a Stormwater Management Implementation Guide are available for viewing at www.eriecountyplanning.org

A municipal implementation workshop was held on March 31st. It was well attended and very productive. Erie County is working with Crawford, Warren and Venango Counties, in order to hold two regional workshops in the future. The times, locations and agendas of these regional workshops have not yet been established. John asked that if anyone has suggestions or requests for specific topics to be addressed at these workshops, to please contact him or Jake at the planning department.

Erie County Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Gerry Dahl provided an update on the status of the Long Range Transportation Plan. Public input via an on-line survey has recently been received, and municipal surveys have been distributed. Survey results have indicated that Peach Street and Downtown Erie are the two most common destination points. The MPO is working on performance based standards. Work on land use and demographic projections are ongoing.

John McGranor added that Jake Welsh extends his thanks to all municipalities that have completed and returned their surveys. Jake also asked him to remind municipalities to please return these surveys if they have not already done so. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated and very beneficial to the planning process.

John also briefly provided a summary of the results of the on-line survey which asked respondents to rate the transportation infrastructure available to them. A total of 251 responses were received. The majority of respondents rated highway access, trails, transit (bus) services, air travel, water port facilities and waterfront access as adequate. Areas considered to be in need of major improvement are local roads, bicycle amenities, access to rail, and rail services.

Erie County Hazard Mitigation Plan – 5 Year Update

John McGranor reiterated the importance that all municipalities participate in the planning process, and adopt the final plan so that they will be eligible for disaster relief funding from FEMA. In order to meet the participation requirement, municipalities are asked to send a representative to at least one of three meetings. The “Kick-off” meeting was held February 10th, and a second meeting was held on March 24th. A final, public meeting is scheduled for May 5th.

John indicated that according to the consultant, Michael Baker, Inc., 27 of our 38 municipalities have met their participation requirement, and only 11 still need to attend a meeting and complete participation documents. According to the consultant this is an excellent participation rate to this point. However, John pointed out that work remains to be done, and re-emphasized the importance of municipal participation.

According to the consultant, the following municipalities have not yet met their participation requirement: Concord Twp, Conneaut Twp, Corry, Elgin, Greenfield Twp, LeBoeuf Twp, McKean Borough, Mill Village, Union City, Waterford Borough and Waterford Twp. John recognized that some in attendance appeared to be surprised by this news, and asked that members follow-up with their municipalities to verify the accuracy of the consultant’s records. If errors have been made, it is important for municipalities to contact John or Jake at the planning department so that corrections can be made.

The anticipated schedule for completion of the plan is as follows:

May 5th – Public meeting

May 12th – Completion of Final Draft

May 13th – Submission to PEMA

PEMA Review – May take 5-9 months. Public comments will be received during PEMA review period & can be incorporated into final plan at same time as PEMA review comments.

Additional information may be obtained at www.eriehmp.com, or by contacting ECDP.

OTHER BUSINESS

The timing of Local Bridge Inspection Reports was a topic of discussion at the last ECPC meeting. As a follow-up, it was announced that the next round of inspections is expected to take place in September and October of 2011.

Jim Cardman announced that an update to the Fairview Township Comprehensive Plan is expected to be completed in June of 2011. The Township is also in the process of updating its zoning ordinance and SALDO. The SALDO is scheduled for completion in September of 2011.

Gerry Dahl invited everyone to attend Corry’s 150th Anniversary celebration, which is scheduled for June 13th – 19th.

Gas drilling is currently a “hot topic”. Gerry Dahl indicated that two wastewater injection wells associated with Marcellus Shale drilling are proposed to be located in Warren County. Due to their relatively close proximity to Corry, they have become the subject of some local controversy.

The difficulties of zoning for gas drilling were briefly discussed. It was also suggested that DEP is understaffed, and therefore may be unable to provide proper enforcement of existing regulations.

The next ECPC meeting will be held at 6:30 PM on May 12, 2011 at the Fairview Township Municipal Building.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.