



COUNTY OF ERIE

Erie County Planning Commission

Erie County Courthouse
140 West Sixth Street - Room 111
Erie, Pennsylvania 16501
Phone: (814) 451-6336
www.eriecountyplanning.org

Gerry Dahl
Chair

Jan Cornwell
Vice-Chairman

**ERIE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Unofficial due to lack of a quorum**

AUGUST 13, 2015

A meeting of the Erie County Planning Commission was held at 6:00 PM on Thursday, August 13, 2015 at the Erie County Conservation District, 1927 Wager Road, Erie, PA.

Those in attendance were:

| ECPC members: | Representing: |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Gerry Dahl | Corry City (Chair, Exec. Board) |
| Charles Casey | Erie City (Exec. Board) |
| Patricia Pfadt | Venango Twp (Exec. Board) |
| William Kuhn | Platea Borough |
| Kurt Lichtenfeld | North East Township |
| | |
| Planning Department Staff: | |
| John McGranor | |
| Amy Murdock | |
| | |
| Guests: | |
| Amanda Bair | Fairview Twp |
| John Pfadt | Venango Twp |
| Anna Frantz | Emerge2040 |

Executive Board members present – 3 of 9; a quorum was not attained

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

None

APPROVAL OF JUNE 11, 2015 MINUTES

Due to a lack of a quorum present at the meeting, approval of the June 11, 2015 minutes was postponed, and will be placed on the September 10, 2015 meeting agenda.

ECDP MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

Amy Murdock – New Planning Program Administrator

John McGranor introduced Amy Murdock as ECDP's new planning program administrator. Amy will be administering the County's Coastal Resource Management Program.

ECDP is Relocating

The County plans to relocate ECDP to the former CamTech site, which is located on the third floor, at the Blasco Library complex. The move is anticipated to occur sometime around October. The Tax Claim Office will be moved to ECDP's current location in the Court House.

Cultural Heritage Plan

ECDP and Preservation Erie have recently been awarded a \$25,000 grant through the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) for development of a Cultural Heritage Plan for Erie County. The plan will build upon the historical resources inventory that was recently completed by Preservation Erie (www.eriebuildings.info) and will enable communities, property owners, organizations, and agencies to better appreciate the cultural and economic value of historic buildings and sites in their communities, and assist civic leaders in planning for their protection and integration into economic revitalization strategies.

ECDP and Preservation Erie are pursuing other funding sources for the remaining funding (\$30,000) that will be needed for the project (\$55,000 total budget). All funding is expected to be secured by early in 2016. The plan should be completed by the end of 2017. The intent is to present the completed plan to County officials for adoption as the new Historical Resources element of the County's comprehensive plan.

CDBG

The Project Prioritization Meeting for FY 2015 will be held as part of the September ECPC meeting (9/10/15). The total funding allocation for 2015 is \$721,956. Included in this amount is the County's allocation of \$277,768.

The projects that will be considered for funding are:

- 1) Lawrence Park Township Gindy's Mobile Home Park Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project

- 2) Waterford Municipal Authority East First Street Water Line Replacement Project
- 3) Union City Municipal Authority Second Avenue/Main Street Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project
- 4) Springfield Township Bicentennial Park Improvement Project
- 5) Union City Borough Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Project
- 6) Wattsburg Borough Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Project

The award letter for FY 2014 has just recently been received. The total award for 2014 was \$644,341 (County/OBO).

Conneaut Township has tentatively agreed to accept its CDBG allocation for FY 2015. They had opted out of the program the past 3 years.

Recycling Program

A new recycling drop off center was opened July 1st in Franklin Township (municipal bldg.), and is open to all Erie County residents. The center was opened to help alleviate capacity problems that have resulted from the heavy use of the Washington Township site.

The 30 day comment period for the Erie County Municipal Solid Waste Plan has been completed (end of July). The Plan will tentatively be submitted to County Council for approval in September.

DEP 904 Grants (performance grant/reimbursement based on recycling tonnage) will be due September 30, 2015. Brittany Prishack, the Erie County Sustainability Coordinator, will be holding a training session near the end of August. The most likely date is August 20th. Brittany will contact the Recycling Coordinators at each municipality with information regarding the meeting date, time, and location.

The DEP 902 Grant (grants for the purchase of assets) round for 2015 has been delayed again. However, there will be a 2015 round, most likely opening sometime around December of this year. Funding awarded will most likely become available around June or July of 2016.

Technical Assistance Grants through DEP are available through an open application process. This is funding up to \$7,500 for consulting work to assist with recycling curbside strategies, recycling education programs, composting site marketing or business planning, etc. Please see the DEP website for more details and examples of completed technical assistance reports (http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/technical_assistance/14066). Questions about this program may be directed to recyclepa@pa.gov, or 717-787-7382

Keep PA Beautiful has launched an Illegal Dump Free PA Campaign. This includes educational information for residents and businesses, as well as a surveillance camera loan program grant. Potential surveillance locations would include municipal sponsored sites and roadside problem areas. Wesleyville Borough is currently using cameras. Additional information is available at <http://illegaldumpfreepa.org/>

Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM)

The Pennsylvania Coastal Resources Management (CRM) Program will be accepting Coastal Zone grant applications for Federal FY 2016 on August 17, 2015 through October 19, 2015. If awarded funding, the grant period will run from October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018.

Projects funded through the CRM Program must be located within or directly affect the Lake Erie Coastal Zone, including the Lake Erie Watershed. The program is an excellent opportunity for participating municipalities to help preserve some of the region's sensitive environmental resources. Eligible applicants are state agencies, local governments and authorities, schools and universities, and incorporated non-profit organizations. All applications can be accessed online through the CRM website at <https://www.dep.state.pa.us/river/czmp.htm>, beginning August 17th and until no later than 4:00 pm on October 19th.

The Grant Application Instruction Guide and the Grant Administration Guide can be accessed on the CRM website for more detailed program information. You may obtain a digital or hard copy of this guide by contacting Amy Murdock in the Erie County Planning Department at 814-451-6018 or by email at amurdock@eriecountygov.org.

The Pennsylvania Coastal Resources Management Office and the Erie County Department of Planning will be conducting two grant solicitation workshops for the FY 2016 Coastal Zone grants. Staff will be available to provide information and instructions on the competitive grant program.

Municipal Needs Survey

ECDP is currently developing a Municipal Needs Survey. The purpose of the survey will be to help ECDP identify and prioritize the types of assistance needed and desired by Erie County municipalities. Potential types of assistance may include, but are not limited to development of zoning ordinances, comprehensive planning, identification of grant opportunities, grant writing, GIS assistance, recycling and sustainability assistance, web design, etc.

It has not yet been determined when the survey will be available and distributed to municipalities.

National Marine Sanctuary

Although the National Marine Sanctuary is not part of the County's CZM program, it is a topic of interest. Amy Murdock attended the public meeting that was held on August 12, 2015, and spoke about the meeting and the proposed National Marine Sanctuary. There are currently only 14 sanctuaries nationwide. The Erie County Executive hopes to submit an application for the Lake Erie Quadrangle National Marine Sanctuary by the end of September. The sanctuary would be comparable to the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary on Lake Huron. It would protect shipwrecks and resources of the

lake, and would have educational and economic/tourism benefits. The Thunder Bay sanctuary drew almost 100,000 visitors last year.

Anna Frantz added that over 100 letters of support have been received from City and County Council, businesses and non-profits.

Charles Casey asked about funding. Amy noted that according to the County Executive, no local “match” will be needed to submit the application.

More information is available at www.lakeeriequadnms.org.

Agricultural Land Preservation Program

Pat Pfadt asked about the status of farm preservation efforts in Venango Township. John McGranor noted that the County is currently working to preserve three farms in Venango Township. The County Agricultural Land Preservation Board has extended agricultural easement purchase offers to all three farms. The landowners will be given 30 days to respond to the offers.

OLD BUSINESS

ECPC Meeting Notices via Email

As discussed at the June ECPC meeting, ECDP plans to provide future meeting notices, agendas and copies of the minutes by email. ECDP will continue to provide notices by regular mail to ECPC members who lack email, or express their preference for regular mail.

John McGranor expressed concerns about the low attendance at tonight’s meeting, and asked if the new email notification might be part of the problem. A few ECPC members noted that they had not received the meeting notice and agenda. It appears that in some cases, the notices were sent to municipal email addresses, and the information was not communicated by the municipalities to their ECPC representatives. During the short discussion that followed, it became apparent that the lack of personal and/or current email addresses is a problem that needs to be addressed.

It was also mentioned that some ECPC members lack printing capabilities, and are unable to print copies of the agendas and minutes. John noted that handout/copies of the meeting agenda were available for tonight’s meeting, and will also be made available at future meetings.

The general consensus of the group was support for the “green” initiative, but that refinements will be needed in order for it to be effective.

NEW BUSINESS

Jan Cornwell Resignation

Gerry Dahl stated that he was contacted by Jan Cornwell, and that she has resigned from the ECPC. Jan represents the County of Erie, and is the Vice-Chair of the ECPC. Gerry was not able to provide any details, but indicated that Jan has been having some health issues, and is no longer able to serve.

The ECPC members voiced their concerns for Jan and their gratitude for her many years of service. Bill Kuhn suggested that it would be nice if the ECPC could give her a plaque or certificate of appreciation. Gerry asked John McGranor to follow-up. John will submit a request to the County Executive for a certificate of appreciation.

Gerry noted that the position of Vice-Chair will need to be filled, and that perhaps an election should be held at the next meeting.

Emerge2040 Update – Presentation by Anna Frantz

The Destination Erie Plan was completed in March, and a new organization, Emerge2040, has been created to work on implementation of the plan. Anna Frantz is the Director of Emerge2040, and gave an update on the projects that are being undertaken. She noted that reference to the year 2040 in the organization's name is in recognition that Destination Erie is intended to be a 25 year plan.

Anna described a long list of projects that are currently being pursued. In general, the projects are focused on strengthening the region's housing stock, creating purposeful education programs that are responsive to the needs of local employers, improving the public transportation system, increasing access to healthy and local foods, and fostering entrepreneurial culture.

For more information, please visit www.Emerge2040.org.

OTHER BUSINESS / MUNICIPAL REPORTS

Charles Casey noted that the Polish Heritage Days are being held this weekend, and encouraged people to attend.

Charles also mentioned the recent news article about Erie developer Rick Griffith and that he is renewing the effort to redevelop the area east of Griswold Park. The plan is to build market rate apartments in the City of Erie.

Bill Kuhn is working with the Borough Association to advocate potential new legislation at the state level that will help to address the critical need for volunteer firefighters and emergency responders. A bill does not currently exist. However, the suggestion is to provide college scholarships to students who are willing to undergo firefighter training and commit to serving as a volunteer firefighter for a set number of years. Bill explained that

the cost of providing this incentive would be far less than the cost of a paid staff of firefighters.

The next ECPC meeting will be held on September 10th, at the Blasco Library.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.