



# Venango County Regional Planning

Phone: (814) 432-9689

Fax: (814) 432-9679

<https://www.co.venango.pa.us/452/Planning-Commission>

1168 Liberty Street

P.O. Box 831

Franklin, PA 16323

## Board Meeting Minutes for the February 2023 Meeting

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Monthly board meeting called to order by Frank Pankratz, at 6:30 PM.

Those present at the public meeting of the Venango County Regional Planning Commission on 02/21/2023 at 6:30 pm, held in in-person at 1174 Elk Street (Courthouse Annex) in Room 100, Franklin PA :

### II. ROLL CALL

#### Members Present:

- Frank Pankratz (Chair)
- Greg Miller (Vice-Chair I)
- Sue Smith (Vice-Chair II)
- Larry Baughman
- Anita Fuchs
- Tracy Jamieson
- Keith Klingler
- Fred Krizinsky
- Nancy Marano
- John McClelland
- Bill Moon
- John Neidich
- Ben Porter
- Glenn Speer - excused
- Megan Weber

#### Staff Present:

- Hilary Buchanan (Executive Director)
- Erik Johnson (Deputy Director)
- Joshua Sterling (Comm. Dev. Planner)
- Alexandria Shreffler (Geo. Analyst)
- Jenna Dillion (Land Use Planner)
- Jason Dillion (Planning & Recycling Assist.)

#### Guests Present (List):

- Kara O'Neil, The Derrick
- Annie Maloney, Foundation For Sustainable Forestry
- Gary Stover, Stover Surveying
- Richard Fields, Homeowner
- Nick Melnick, Cornplanter Township

# VCRPC BOARD APPROVED

MARCH 21, 2023

Quorum Present:  Yes  No

The attendance of 10 board members (of the 15 current appointees) was accounted for by Alexandria Shreffler.

### III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. 11/15/2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
  - ✓ Motion to approve the minutes made by Sue Smith; Seconded by Keith Klingler. All approved.

### IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- None.

### V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF REPORTS

- **Executive Director, Hilary Buchanan** – shared that Jason Dillion was hired on a recycling/planning assistant and has already obtained his housing inspector certification. The Infrastructure Bank application period opened in January with an application deadline of March 28<sup>th</sup> and a target award date in September. A survey proposed by the Housing Coalition is being developed which will collect data on the condition of housing throughout the County. There is a tentative May date for an in-person meeting with training planned for survey volunteers. The

Comprehensive Plan update has completed two engagement meetings with over 200 surveys completed to-date. She shared that CEDS groups (broadband, housing) are meeting to discuss the implementation of plans from the past. The bridge consultant, STV, is prepared to arrange bridge inspections with municipalities in an effort to develop long-term plans to address aging infrastructure throughout the County. The Multi-Use Trail project on Allegheny Boulevard has a tentative construction start date of April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

- **Geospatial Analyst, Alex Shreffler** – shared that the proposed housing stock survey has been planned and created, ongoing work will involve developing training materials for volunteers. As a result of this project, another mapping tool was developed which identified the parcel condition rated by the assessment office in relation to the corridor of major roadways and received home rehab program applications. This interactive map was present the Venango County Land Bank and may be developed further to include the location of current properties on the Tax Claims repository and judicial sale lists.
- **Deputy Director & Recycling Coordinator, Erik Johnson** – announced that more permanent signage will be developed by Custom Signs. This will include signs for the recycling bins and other signage warning against dumping and notifying of security policy. The project to expand the building will need to be reviewed by the Federal Aviation Administration since the building is on airport property, which may take 120 or more days to receive a response. As a result, an extension for the allotted project funding has been requested, pushing the deadline to October. The Board asked if hours would be expanded, and Staff responded that once the building addition has been completed, there will be more capacity to accept more material, which would in turn allow for additional hours of operation. He also shared information about equipment that would help with loading and processing more material. There was discussion about the public/private partnership that had been envisioned with the most recent solid waste management plan and the nuance of encouraging that relationship to continue against the unstable market.
- **Planning & Recycling Assistant, Jason Dillion** – shared that he is glad to be newly hired and has been working in both the center to process cardboard and the office to obtain his housing inspector certification. The first, main part of the online training and testing has been completed, and he is now able to start completing inspections for the home rehab program. He needs to complete a few more supplemental certifications to complete the online course, which is usually expected to take 3-6 months.
- **Community Development Planner, Joshua Sterling** – shared that three (3) blight demolitions have been initiated since the last meeting, three (3) homes in the county-wide home rehab program are in the inspection phase, two (2) homes in Cranberry Township are nearing completion, and two (2) in Sugar creek Borough are in the inspection phase. The HOME grant was awarded in the amount of \$600,000, allowing for the intake qualification process to begin for seven (7) projects in the Oil City and Franklin area. He also announced the award of the Pennsylvania Whole-Home Repairs Program, which will invest \$190,375 into home rehab (split evenly between owner-occupied and rental properties) and \$194,257 into workforce development to support residential construction trades.
- **Land Use Planner, Jenna Dillion** – provided an update for each of the land developments in various phases of review. The Log Cabin (Cranberry Township) final revised plans were received and the financial security has been released. She also completed preliminary review and provided comments for four (4) subdivisions and completed final review of ten (10) subdivisions. She has also been participating in meetings together with Alex and municipalities to discuss stormwater and floodplain management.

## VI. SUBDIVISIONS AND LAND DEVELOPMENTS

### a. Davis Subdivision

Jenna Dillion summarized that the homeowner was requesting a waiver from SALDO Section 308.B.1 which requires that no lot of tract of land shall be created or sold which is neither smaller than the minimum lot size under this Ordinance nor the applicable zoning ordinance. The current lot configuration is smaller than the minimum lot size, with this subdivision proposal requesting that waiver be granted to allow the two existing housing to be separated onto their own parcels.

- ✓ Motion to table until more information about the history of this parcel could be collected made by Anita Fuchs; Seconded by Nancy Marano. All approved.

## **VII. SPECIAL PURPOSE MATTERS**

### **a. Solar Ordinance Draft**

The Board and Staff discussed the presented draft of a county-wide solar ordinance which would apply in all municipalities which have not adopted their own solar ordinance. The Staff agreed to incorporate suggestions, make revisions, and make a new draft available for review at the next meeting.

### **b. Annual Report Draft**

✓ Motion to approve pending suggested edits made by Greg Miller ; Seconded by Sue Smith. All approved.

### **c. Election of Officers**

Hilary Buchanan expressed thanks to Nick Melnick for his ten (10) years of service to the Planning Commission. She also welcomed new members Larry Baughman and John McClelland.

✓ Motion to elect the current officers made by Larry Baughman ; Seconded by Keith Klingler. All approved.

## **VIII. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a. COG Representatives – Report was given by Greg Miller. The last COG meeting held on February 16<sup>th</sup> was held at the Sandycreek Township Building. A representative from DEP shared information about an increase in PennVEST funding, and would try to coordinate a future meeting in Venango County about the program. The next COG meeting will be held on March 16<sup>th</sup> at the City Hall in Oil City. The annual Spring Dinner will be held on March 25<sup>th</sup> at the Sandycreek Township Fire Hall, with registration starting at 5:30 and dinner at 6:00 PM.

## **IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL**

- Annie Maloney introduced herself to the Board as a representative of the Foundation For Sustainable Forestry, a local non-profit organization concerned with ecological forestry. Since the Foundation currently owns land in Venango County and may own more in the future, she wanted to meet the Board personally to encourage open dialogue about land conservation and forestry since the Foundation had recently been seeking a DCNR grant.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

- ✓ Motion to adjourn by Keith Klingler ; Seconded by Anita Fuchs. All approved at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandria Shreffler