

**CENTRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**Thursday  
February 5, 2009  
7:30 pm**

**Centre Region COG Building**

**CRPC Members Present:**

Don Epp	Patton Township
Larry Fennessey	Halfmoon Township
Janet Sulzer	College Township
Ralph Wheland (for Bill Keough)	Ferguson Township
Charles Gable	State College Borough
Ron Buckalew, Chair	Harris Township
Steve Watson	Pennsylvania State University

**Others Present:**

Sarah Fournier	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Mark Holdren	CRPA
DJ Liggett	CRPA
Trish Meek	CRPA
Eric Vorwald	CRPA
Tom Zilla, Interim Director	CRPA
Carl Hess	State College Borough

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Buckalew called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**2. REORGANIZATION**

Mr. Buckalew introduced the 2009 members of the Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC) noting new members, Mr. Fennessey for Halfmoon Township. Mr. Keogh will be representing Ferguson Township at future meetings.

Mr. Vorwald accepted nominations for Chair of the CRPC. Mr. Epp nominated Ron Buckalew for Chair of the CRPC seconded by Mr. Gable. Mr. Watson moved the nominations be closed, seconded by Mr. Wheland. The vote was unanimous for Mr. Ron Buckalew as Chair for the 2009 CRPC.

Ms. Sulzer nominated Mr. Watson for Vice-Chair of the CRPC, seconded by Mr. Epp. Mr. Wheland moved that the nominations be closed, seconded by Mr. Gable. The vote was unanimous for Mr. Steve Watson as Vice-Chair for the 2009 CRPC.

Mr. Watson moved to appoint the Centre Regional Planning Agency Director as the Commission's representative on the MPO's Technical Committee, seconded by Mr. Gable. All were in favor.

Mr. Zilla gave an update on the selection of a new CRPA Director. A total of 18 resumes were reviewed by the Review Committee and they were narrowed down to five potential candidates, including one candidate from the first round. Interviews will be scheduled in the next several weeks.

Mr. Zilla reported there were 35 applicants for the Patton Township's planner position that were narrowed down to six potential candidates. The applicants are being notified for interviews that will take place in late February and early March.

Additional liaisons/appointments were agreed upon by consensus as follows:

- Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) – Mr. Buckalew
- Millbrook Marsh Nature Center – Mr. Epp
- State College Borough Water Authority – Mr. Fennessey
- University Area Joint Authority (UAJA) – Ms. Sulzer

### 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

*Mr. Gable made a motion to approve the minutes of the January, 2008 CRPC meeting, with editorial corrections. Mr. Epp seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.*

### 4. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

### 5. REGIONAL INTEREST ITEMS

#### **Halfmoon Township**

There was no report.

#### **Patton Township**

Mr. Epp reported on discussions regarding Woodycrest Center. The potential developer for Woodycrest Center has made a request for zoning changes for a mixed use residential and business development along Waddle Road. A request to expand the right-of-way to make Waddle Road three lanes was also made. There is also a site plan under consideration for the former Mellot's trailer park in the Woodycrest neighborhood that includes an entrance/exit onto Atherton Street opposite the driveway into Denny's Restaurant. Residents who live in the area are concerned about the increase in traffic. Mr. Epp will continue to provide updates.

#### **College Township**

Ms. Sulzer reported that the Planning Commission approved and recommended to Council approval the following plans:

- PSU Bio Laboratory - Level three research building consisting of a 15,000 square foot building located at the intersection of Orchard Road and State Route 322/Interstate 99
- College Township Pumphouse Building – Constructed and used by the Township for the new beneficial reuse heating/cooling system at the Township building

**Ferguson Township**

There was no report.

**State College Borough**

Mr. Gable reported that the Planning Commission is close to completing the design standards for the West End.

**Harris Township**

Mr. Buckalew reported that progress is being made on a Workforce Housing Policies & Procedures Manual, the Riparian Buffer Ordinance, and the 2009 work plan.

**Pennsylvania State University**

Mr. Watson reported that the PSU Transportation Services Division has recently issued a new parking demand study. It should help to validate the numbers used in the parking calculations, especially related to parking in several UPD subdistricts.

**6. STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT**

A copy of the Staff Activity Report and list of new plans reviewed was included in the agenda.

Mr. Zilla reported on future agenda items.

- The State College Area School District (SCASD) has asked the CRPA for input on the SCASD master facilities plan. A presentation will be given in the upcoming months for comment.
- An annual report for 2008 will be provided for review
- A Work Program for 2009 will be provided for review

Mr. Zilla noted that the Commission delegated the review responsibilities for the municipal Riparian Buffer Ordinances to staff, contingent on there not being any significant changes from the model ordinance. To date Halfmoon Township has adopted the Stream Buffer Ordinance, with no changes. Harris, College, and Ferguson Townships are currently working through the process but are not ready for review. Patton Township will begin review when the new local planner has been hired.

Mr. Zilla noted that the Ferguson Township Supervisors took action to the lower the square footage permitted for commercial uses in the Planned Residential District (PRD).

Ms. Sulzer noted a couple of corrections to be made to the list of new plans reviewed.

**7. CONSULTANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CRPC AND THE FIRM OF WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP (WR&A) FOR THE CCMPO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)**

Ms. Meek said the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) updated the Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) in July 2008. The original plan was adopted in July

2006. Federal law requires a complete update every four years, requiring an update by September 2010. The plan must provide for at least a 20 year time horizon and be fiscally constrained. She noted that the LRTP for Centre County will be a thirty year plan.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) includes supplemental planning funds for the Travel Demand Model Update and the design of Socioeconomic Forecast database for the LRTP. The Travel Demand Model is used to help identify traffic volumes and where the most pressure is expected in the roadway network. It will also be multimodal, to address transit uses. Some of the items required for the project are the forecasted population and employment data. The forecast was last done was in 2003, and the data has been used for multiple purposes, including sewage/water planning and transportation planning. The goal is to have a data base that can continually be updated for the future. The Request for Proposals (RFP) for preparation of the Travel Demand Model and Socioeconomic Forecast included the following tasks:

- Update software
- Update the model network and traffic analysis zone (TAZ) structure
- Calibrate model to 2008 traffic conditions
- Complete model runs
- Design a database for the population and employment forecast data

The RFP packets were provided to 23 firms. Six firms attended a proposal meeting, held on December 3, 2008. Seven proposals were received.

A Selection Committee comprised of representatives from PennDOT, CRPA and Centre County staff evaluated the proposals based on three evaluation criteria:

- Qualifications/experiences (40 points)
- Scope of work (40 points)
- Timeline/schedule (20 points)

Three firms were selected for interviews. Based on the interview and evaluation criteria, the Committee recommends that Whitman, Requardt, and Associates (WR&A) from Seven Fields Pennsylvania be awarded the contract. The proposed contract is \$70,673.87.

Ms. Meek reviewed the proposed timeline for the project, noting that the notice to proceed would be issued following approval by the Commission. Staff will meet with each municipality at the start of the forecasting work to review maps of potential future development.

Ms Meek noted that the project will result in a county-wide model. CRPA staff will focus on the Centre Region municipalities, and Benner and Spring Townships and Bellefonte Borough. The outlying areas will be completed by the Centre County Planning staff. Areas that are more developed or areas where there is development pressure will be reviewed on parcel by parcel basis. Other areas will be considered on a larger geographic basis. The model runs will begin in July 2009. The information gathered will be used to help rank the LRTP projects.

In response to a question from Mr. Watson regarding whether price is a factor in the selection process, Ms. Meek explained that because of the type of federal funds being used, costs are not to be considered.

Mr. Watson asked what would happen if the cost of the selected consultant is higher than the budget for the project. Ms. Meek said there is a process to address such situations. She noted that negotiations begin with the top firm and, if the cost can not be negotiated down to within the range of the financial resources available, then the second ranked firm could be considered.

Mr. Buckalew asked whether the MPO had ever worked with WR&A. Ms. Meek said they hadn't, however, the firm came highly recommended, based on conversations with people within and out-of-state where the firm had done work.

Mr. Gable asked for the definition of Smart Transportation. Mr. Zilla said the concept is based on doing more with less. It focuses on trying to be more efficient, considering multimodal opportunities and land use. These concepts are not mandated, but they are the direction that PennDOT will be taking in the future.

Motion was made by Mr. Gable and seconded by Ms. Sulzer to authorize the Chair and Vice Chair to execute a final consultant services agreement for transportation planning services with WR&A, in the amount of \$70,673.87. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**8. CENTRE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CCMPO) – FY 2009-10 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)**

Mr. Zilla reported that the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) is responsible for coordinating long range transportation planning and short-range programming of federal and some state capital funds for highways, bridges, and public transportation. The Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC) is one of 19 voting members of the CCMPO. The CCMPO adopts a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) every year in February, based on the State's fiscal year: July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. The UPWP lists work tasks for the CCMPO staff and important actions by the CCMPO. The UPWP must be adopted by February 28, 2009 and submitted to PennDOT the beginning of March

Mr. Zilla reviewed projects on the UPWP, including:

- Improvements on Routes 26, 322, 350
- Signaling project on North Atherton Street
- Whitehall Road Widening Project

Nontraditional projects include:

- Transportation Enhancements
- Federal Safe Routes to School
- PA Community Transportation Initiative projects

Transit Planning and Technology projects include:

- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Bus improvements such as GPSs
- On line busing system

Special initiative projects include:

- New federal authorization legislation
- I-80 toll conversion project

The CRPC is the contracting agency for the UPWP. Mr. Zilla noted that there will be no increase in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the base UPWP. Each year there is an opportunity to request additional supplemental funds, above the base amount, for upcoming projects.

FY 2007-08 included supplemental planning funds for the Coordination of Comprehensive Land Use Planning and Transportation Planning and the Assessment of Public Transportation Services in Centre County. The current FY 2008 – 09 includes \$100,000 for an update the Travel Demand Model and Socioeconomic Forecast data; \$75,000 for consultant services and \$25,000 for staff time. There will be no additional supplemental funds requested for new tasks the FY 2009 – 2010; however, there will be a request \$15,000 in supplemental planning funds in FY 2009-10 for the purchase of new software.

A Final Draft UPWP will be prepared for discussion at the February meetings of the CCMPO Technical and Coordinating Committees. The goal will be to adopt the UPWP by February 28, and submit it to PennDOT in early March.

Mr. Watson asked about the Safe Routes to Schools Program that is referenced in Transportation Enhancements section of the draft UPWP. Ms. Meek reported that previously there was a Safe Routes to School Program administered by the State. Last year, an open application was held for a Federal Safe Routes to School Program, using different criteria. The deadline for submission of projects was October 2008. There has been no word on who the successful applicants are.

Motion was made by Ms. Sulzer to approve the FY 2009-10 UPWP, including a request of \$15,000 in supplemental planning funds for software purchases needed to complete the LRTP Socioeconomic and Travel Demand Model project. Mr. Gable seconded the motion. Vote in favor was unanimous.

## **9. RESOLUTION FOR PENNDOT/CRPC AGREEMENTS**

Mr. Zilla said that PennDOT requires an adopted resolution that authorizes the CRPC Chair or Vice-Chair to execute legal agreements between PennDOT and the Commission. The legal agreements provide the mechanism by which federal and state funding is provided to the CRPA for CCMPO-related work tasks.

Motion was made by Mr. Wheland and seconded by Mr. Gable to approve the resolution authorizing the CRPC Chair and Vice-Chair to execute agreements between PennDOT and CRPC for the performance of transportation planning work tasks completed on behalf of the CCMPO. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**10. TIME EXTENSION FOR FY 2007-8 ANNUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN PENNDOT AND THE CRPC**

Mr. Zilla said there are two supplemental planning funds projects that were approved in the FY 2007-08 UPWP: Coordination of Comprehensive Land Use Planning and Transportation Planning and Assessment of Public Transportation Services in Centre County. An agreement executed in 2008 extended the termination dates for those projects to June 2009. He noted that these projects will go beyond June 2009, and in order to protect the ability to access funds for the projects beyond the current termination date, a request for a time extension must be requested. He noted that PennDOT is in favor of extending the termination date, pending the Commission's approval and a letter from staff.

Motion was made by Mr. Epp and seconded by Ms. Sulzer to authorize the Chair and Vice-Chair to execute a Letter of Supplement Agreement between the CRPC and PennDOT to extend the termination date of Agreement 520657-L from June 30, 2009 to March 31, 2010 in order to maintain access to supplemental planning funds previously approved for Task VLL.A. and Task VLL.B, contingent upon the CCPMO's amendment of the FY 2007-08 UPWP to reflect the time extension for the two projects, and receipt of the contract documents from PennDOT. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**11. DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT (DRI) FOR COLLEGE TOWNSHIP**

Mr. Vorwald provided an overview of the DRI process, noting that there are three ways that a DRI can be initiated:

- Request to expand the Regional Growth Boundary or Sewer Service Area (RGB/SSA)
- A change in zoning within the RGB/SSA that would increase density by 50 or more Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDU)
- Any increase outside the RGB/SSA

Mr. Vorwald reported that College Township is proposing a zoning amendment within the RGB/SSA that will increase density by 50 or more equivalent dwelling units (EDUs).

Mr. Holdren reported that the Draft DRI is being submitted on behalf of College Township to address a zoning change to accommodate the development of workforce housing. He noted that College Township began to prepare a workforce housing ordinance two years ago in response to the increasing gap between home prices and the area median income.

He reported that research revealed the following:

- Land and site development costs are a major portion of new construction costs
- Site development costs can add \$30,000 to the price of a new home
- Parkland and stormwater requirements add to the cost and reduce the developable area that can be used for new housing
- Setbacks, lot widths and parkland/open space requirements decrease density
- Impact fees are passed on to future homeowners

To help decrease costs for new housing, the township created an incentive based ordinance. Density could be increased by decreasing lot widths, setbacks, and minimum lot sizes. Decreasing infrastructure costs could be achieved by limiting sidewalk and parkland requirements for workforce housing units.

Mr. Holdren defined workforce housing as housing that is affordable to those earning 60% to 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

The ordinance would reduce the minimum lot size in the R-1 zoning from 8,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet. The lot width would be reduced from 80 feet to 40 feet, doubling the number of houses on a street. Maximum impervious coverage would increase to 50%. Setback reductions would be as follows: front - 10 feet, side - 7 feet, rear - 30 feet. The maximum height requirement would increase to 40 feet.

Additional relief would be achieved through a 50% reduction in sidewalks. There would also be a reduction in parkland/open space requirements of up to 50%. The developer would not be required to provide parkland for workforce housing units. The ordinance allows for flexible setbacks for both market rate and workforce housing units so that workforce housing can blend in easily. The work force housing standards can be applied to the market rate lots.

Mr. Holdren reviewed the zoning districts that would be affected, noting that the R1 - single family, RO - residential office, and the R2 - two family districts would be included in the ordinance. He noted that vacant land currently zoned R1 would permit the development of 755 dwelling units. If the developer chose to utilize the Planned Residential District (PRD) zoning option, a total of 1,076 dwelling units could be built, in addition to limited commercial uses. The proposed workforce housing ordinance would allow up to 1,183 potential dwelling units, if the developer took advantage of the incentives.

Mr. Holdren reported that the State College Borough Water Authority and the College Township Water Authority do not anticipate distribution problems for the projected new units. Any mainline extensions or new hydrants would be the responsibility of the developers.

The affected properties are within the RBG/SSA, and public sewer service would be provided by the University Area Joint Authority (UAJA). The development potential under the workforce housing ordinance would result in an increase of approximately 10 percent over existing development potential. There were no capacity issues identified by UAJA for the proposed increase in dwelling units; however the Benner Pike Pump Station would likely need to be upgraded.

Given the varied locations of the residential building lots, there is no specific negative impact anticipated to the transportation network. Any site specific issues can be addressed at time of the subdivision/land development phase. Most of the sites have transit service adjacent to the properties. All parcels are within reasonable walking distance to transit service. Through increased density the areas could be made more efficient because there is the potential for additional riders in a smaller service area.

Mr. Bair, Fire Administrator did not expect the additional dwelling units to represent a burden to the Boalsburg or Alpha Fire Departments. A greater concern is the reduction in setbacks and the potential for fire spread between structures. He felt some of those issues could be resolved during the land development phase. All parcels appear to have good access for fire apparatus.

Chief King of the State College Police estimated a slight increase in the level of service provided to the new dwelling units, and noted that single-family, owner occupied homes do not generate a high volume of police calls.

Any proposed new development resulting from the zoning changes will generate up to 130 new students for the State College Area School District (SCASD). As a result, no new school facilities would be needed.

A "per capita multiplier" method was used to determine the Fiscal Impact of the zoning ordinance amendment. It revealed that there would be an impact of \$2 million to the SCASD and an impact of \$400,000 to College Township. Using the "per capita multiplier" method, the R1 zone, without

workforce housing, would yield a positive impact of \$1.8 million and a negative impact to College Township of approximately \$183,000.

The conclusion is that market-rate housing will increase costs at a lower rate than workforce housing, due to the value of the homes and the incomes of those residents. College Township doesn't view the fiscal numbers as a negative, but instead, as a way of providing homes for a wide variety of future residents.

Mr. Holdren summarized the conclusions of the DRI Report as follows:

- Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Smart Growth Strategies
- Compatible with surrounding land uses
- Provides a tool for developers to utilize to construct workforce housing – it is not a requirement
- Most impacts are minor or minimal increases in service needs
- Impacts likely to be less than those reported in the DRI because provisions are not requirements
- Negative fiscal impact numbers considered by the Township to be inconsequential to the ability to provide affordable housing.

The Commission was provided a copy of the DRI Review prepared by CRPA. Mr. Vorwald said that everything that has been identified has been addressed.

Mr. Watson asked if UAJA formally submitted a letter of review. Mr. Holdren said that he has requested comments but has yet to receive them.

Mr. Epp asked how eligibility for workforce housing is determined. Mr. Holdren said that the ordinance requires the township to certify an organization that would determine eligibility. He noted that a third party, such as the Centre County Housing & Land Trust or the State College Borough Land Trust, would likely be used to determine eligibility and monitor the program. The guidelines would require that the homeowner be within 60 -100% AMI.

Mr. Gable asked whether there are specific requirements for developing in a floodplain. Mr. Holdren said that structures are restricted from flood plains. When considering the Riparian Buffer Ordinance no new structures are permitted in a flood plain. Existing structures may be protected by grandfather clauses.

Mr. Wheland inquired about the cost of administering the workforce housing program. Mr. Hess said that the State College Borough has a contract with Harris Township for administering its workforce housing program and would be willing to assist College Township. He noted that costs are based on hours of service provided.

Mr. Watson thought a narrative should be added to explain the thoughts on administrating the workforce housing process.

Mr. Vorwald reminded the Commission members that they would be asked to consider the DRI again at their March meeting to provide comments to College Township. A CRPC representative will need to be appointed in March to present the Commission's comments to the General Forum at its March 23, 2009 meeting.

## **12. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Zilla reported that reimbursement was received for the ACT 537 Plan work in 2008 as part of the CRPA budget. He explained that the funds would be used to repay a loan from the Fire Fund, which was used to pay the upfront costs of the Plan.

Mr. Zilla reported that PennDOT is invoiced on a quarterly basis, after costs are incurred in the MPO budget. This is a preliminary year end report and it reflects the revenue that is anticipated. The revenue anticipated from PennDOT for the Supplemental Fund is lower because the consultant for the land use and transportation projects was not yet under contract in 2008. It is anticipated that a small fund balance will be carried into 2009.

Mr. Zilla said that a report will be given later in the year to address the net changes that will occur from the staff vacancies.

**13. CENTRE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CCMPO) REPORT**

There was no report.

**14. WATER LIAISON'S REPORT**

Mr. Vorwald reported that the Water Authority held its reorganization meeting on January 15. There was a report on the 2007 Water Resources Monitoring Project. Bids accepted for vehicles to be purchased.

**15. MILLBROOK MARSH NATURE CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Mr. Epp reported that plans are being developed to solicit bids for a new building at Millbrook Marsh. He noted that the goal is to begin construction at the start of the next building season.

**16. UNIVERSITY AREA JOINT AUTHORITY (UAJA)**

There was no report.

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Fournier  
Recording Secretary