1. CALL TO ORDER

Joseph Griffin, Chairman, called the regular monthly meeting of the Berks County Planning Commission to order at 3:05 p.m. The meeting was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 in the Planning Commission offices on the fourteenth floor of the Berks County Services Center, Reading, Pennsylvania.

The following members were present:

Joseph Griffin, Chairman
Peter F. Giorgi, Esquire, Vice-Chairman
Lloyd W. Hopkins, Jr.
James C. McCarthy, Secretary
Lee C. Olsen
Douglas P. Rauch, Esq.
Mark C. Scott

Not in attendance:

James L. Mason
Barry L. Schlouch

Also Attending:

Heidi B. Masano, Asst. County Solicitor
Glenn R. Knoblauch, Exec. Director
Cheryl A. Auchenbach, Planner III
Beth Burkovich, GIS Analyst
Michelle D. Franklin, Planner III
Michael D. Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler
Devon B. Hain, Planning Technician
Ashley J. Mazurek, Planner II
Matthew F. McGough, Planner II
Jamie L. Passon, Planner II
Alan D. Piper, Trans. Planner III
Shannon L. Rossman, Intergovernmental Planner III
Amanda M. Timochenko, Planner II
Pauline R. Klopp, Office Support V
Charles Jones, City of Reading
Ralph Johnson, City of Reading
Vaughn Spencer, City of Reading
2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

A. Chairman’s Report

The Chairman’s Report had been previously distributed via e-mail.

B. Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Knoblauch reminded the Commission of the Berks Municipal Partnership Dinner scheduled for February 16, 2012 at the Reading County Club. He then mentioned that he, Cheryl Auchenbach, Shannon Rossman and Alan Piper had been meeting with John Kramer and the Center for Excellence in Community Leadership to come up with three sessions in the Spring for the Advanced Master Planner Program. The first session scheduled for March 15th is on Flexible Zoning Techniques for Achieving Community goals. The next session is scheduled for April 19th – Determining Community Character Workshop and the last session is scheduled for May 22nd – Land Use – Transportation Coordination Workshop.

Mr. Knoblauch informed the Commission that March 1st is the kickoff for our office to start the new plan recording procedure. Plans will be scanned and notice will be sent to the Recorder of Deeds Office that a plan was endorsed and our office will collect the fees for recording. There is one set price for recording regardless of how many pages someone is recording.

Mr. Knoblauch mentioned that when the Comprehensive Plan Committee had met in January there were suggested changes to be made to the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Staff is working on those changes and hopefully can present the draft at next month’s meeting.

4. REMARKS ON THE REVITALIZATION OF READING – MAYOR VAUGHN SPENCER

Mayor Spencer spoke to the Commission on his ideas for the Revitalization of the City of Reading.

5. REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Griffin mentioned that the Planning Committee did not get a chance to meet so they will report at next month’s meeting.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes of January 11, 2012
b. **PENNVEST – Geigertown Area Authority Sewer Project**

The above-mentioned PENNVEST grant application was received for review and support. The submittal is based upon the Act 537 Plan Revision that the Planning Commission reviewed and agreed with in November, 2011. This application is being submitted to determine if the Geigertown Area Joint Authority will be eligible for grants, loans or both from PENNVEST.

The Act 537 Plan Revision proposes to send sewer to the Birdsboro Sewer Treatment Plant along Geigertown Road via the Kulptown interconnection. Cost of this alternative is estimated at $4,321,154 with operation and maintenance costs of $58,670/year. Estimated user costs are:

- $3,000 tap-in fee per EDU
- 113 EDU, with an estimated addition of 32 EDU’s between now and 2025.
- Monthly user fee estimate of $149 (based upon PENNVEST loan).
- All fees are dependent upon grants and financing options obtained.
- Geigertown Area Joint Authority has received one grant so far, in the amount of $267,198.

Staff prepared a letter with the following comments:

- Currently, the Berks County Planning Commission is in the process of updating the Berks County Comprehensive Plan. The draft Future Land Use Map identifies the Geigertown Road area as Existing Developed, Future Growth, Rural Conservation and Permanent Open Space/Recreation. The proposed revision is consistent with the Draft Comprehensive Plan.
- The project is also consistent with the Berks County Sewer and Water Regionalization Study. Connection of failing septic systems to existing sewerage treatment facilities is recommended where physically and economically possible.
- The Commission supports the provision of grants and loans to the Geigertown Area Joint Authority for the purpose of correcting its septic issues.

c. **PENNVEST – Berks County Conservation District – Havens & Kopfer Farms**

Staff received a request for a letter of support for a PENNVEST application to install manure storage and containment facilities on the Wade Havens Farm, Tilden Township, and the David Kopfer Farm, Maidencreek Township, Berks County. The project involves the installation of the following:

Havens Farm (Berks County Conservancy Eased Farm)
- Manure storage and containment needs
- Eliminate existing non-conforming manure storages
- Heavy use area (part of the barnyard that does not support grass) and barnyard controls
- Cost - $637,881
Kopfer Farm (Berks County Agricultural Conservation Eased Farm)
- Manure storage and containment needs
- Eliminate existing non-conforming manure storages
- Prevent manure and barnyard runoff from entering into the nearby Willow Creek
- Cost - $403,143

Staff prepared a letter of support stating: “The Berks County Comprehensive Plan identifies both of these parcels as Agricultural Preservation. Both parcels also contain streams. The project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan. The protection and improvement of water quality is specifically recommended in the Plan. The Plan also recognizes the importance of protecting the surface waters of Berks County from contaminated stormwater runoff.”

d. PENNVEST – City of Reading Sewer Pipe Project

Staff received a PENNVEST funding application from the City of Reading for review. The City of Reading is proposing to install 7,000 linear feet of a new 42” ductile iron force main. The new force main will be installed adjacent to the existing force main which extends from the 6th and Canal Pump Station to the Fritz Island Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The proposed project is addressing the numerous leaks which have flowed into the Schuylkill River.

The estimated project cost is $15 million. The authority is requesting $15 million from PENNVEST.

Staff prepared a letter with the following comments:

- The proposed project is consistent with both the Berks County Sewer and Water Regionalization Study and the County Comprehensive Plan.
- This project will reduce potential water contamination by relieving the current malfunctioning pipe of full time duty with the installation of the new pipe.
- The Berks County Planning Commission supports the project that the City of Reading is proposing in its grant application and recommends that PENNVEST approve this project for funding.

e. East Penn Mfg. – Injection Molding Parking Lot Expansion – Time Extension

The Planning Commission received a request for a time extension for East Penn Manufacturing Co., Inc. Injection Molding Parking Expansion Land Development Plan in Lyons Borough. The initial 90-day review period extends to March 13, 2012 the day before the March Planning Commission Meeting. Staff prepared a letter granting the time extension to June 13, 2012.
f. Reports for Approval
   - Land Development & Subdivision Activity Report, 12/20/11 – 1/18/12
   - Endorsed Land Development & Subdivision Activity
   - PADEP Land Use Questionnaire Listing

MOTION: Mr. McCarthy made a motion to approve all items on the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rauch and passed unanimously.

7. ITEMS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION
   1. January, 2012 Staff Activities
   2. January, 2012 Review Actions

   These are just informational items for the Planning Commission to review.

8. MISCELLANEOUS
   a. County Natural Heritage Inventory Update

      Mr. Knoblauch mentioned that he and Cheryl Auchenbach had met with the Western PA Conservancy on updating the County Natural Heritage Inventory for Berks County and Chester County. He had stated that Cheryl Auchenbach will be serving on that Committee. It will take approximately three years to complete. There is no cost associated with this project other than staff time.

      Mr. Griffin informed the Commission that Senator Judy Schwank will be speaking at next month’s Planning Commission meeting on the importance of Agriculture.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Olsen made a motion to adjourn and the meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

___________________________________  __________________________________
Joseph Griffin, Chairman                James C. McCarthy, Secretary