



Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)

Board of Director's Meeting
Wednesday, December 9, 2020
Virtual Meeting

Members: K. Barnhardt (County), K. Mallatratt (Alsace Twp.), L. Kelleher (Reading), D. Pottiger (Lower Alsace Twp.), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Reading), L. Olsen (County)

Members absent: B. Petrov (Mt. Penn), Council Rep (Mt. Penn), D. Barth (Alsace Twp), J. Oswald (Lower Alsace)

Others attending: B. Burkovich, A. Showers, M. Brophy, C. Quandel, L. Kissinger, A. Amoros

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and stated that a quorum is present. Due to the COVID-19 Declaration of Emergency, the MP3 is meeting virtually with public comment invited in writing via email or through registration via Zoom.

Mr. Barnhardt noted that City Managing Director Abe Amoros is attending and he welcomed him to the MP3 meeting. Mr. Amoros thanked Mr. Barnhardt, noting that he is interested in learning more about this organization and the work of the organization.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Barnhardt inquired if Ms. Kelleher received any written public comment. Ms. Kelleher replied in the negative. He asked if members of the public present wished to comment. None of the 11 attendees present offered comment at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Barnhardt asked the members to consider the minutes from the July meeting and the agenda for this meeting.

The September minutes and the agenda were approved by acclimation with no changes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Mallatratt, MP3COG Treasurer, called attention to the reports distributed electronically, showing no expenses and deposits of \$163 creating a balance of \$19,593.83. The MP3 made a profit of \$1072.60 from calendar sales. She stated that the MP3 Dues invoices will be distributed electronically at the beginning of January. There were no bills to approve.

The Treasurer's Report was approved via acclimation.

MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

1. BAMBA Upgrade to Silver Rating

BAMBA is working to add the additional signage requested for the upgrade to Silver.

2. Update Mt Penn Borough Status

Mr. Barnhardt reported that he recently spoke with new Mt. Penn Council President Troy Goodman who is interested in maintaining Mt. Penn Borough's connection with the MP3 COG. Mt. Penn is currently working with Paul Janssen to develop a five year financial plan which will help stabilize the borough. He noted the need for the Mt. Penn Council to appoint a new elected official to replace former MP3 rep Ms. Hurowitz.

3. Update Pagoda Parking Lot Renovation

Mr. Kissinger stated that the project is currently under design and will be funded through capital projects. The project is expected to take place in 2021.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the needs of the wall must also be considered and balanced along with the parking lot issue, as the funding for the parking lot renovation will be taken from the wall project. She noted that Mr. Rock has expressed concern that the change in the parking lot design could disrupt the racing pattern on Duryea Drive.

Mr. Olsen asked to be provided with a copy of the design plans.

4. Pagoda Trail

Ms. Showers shared a map of the trail running from the DoubleTree Hotel on Penn Street, through City Park and up Mt. Penn to the Pagoda. She noted that the proposed trail crossing at North 11th and Penn Street intersection has some crossing impediments that could be improved through some additional signage and/or signals. Coordination with the City's public works department and their streets program is needed. She also noted the need to explore shuttle service between the Pagoda and the DoubleTree for those wishing to only travel in one direction.

Ms. Showers next displayed photographs taken of various trail features during a walk from the Pagoda to City Park, noting that the trail runs two miles in each direction. She noted the various points that will require directional or interpretative signage. She stated that improvements to pedestrian crossing areas are required at the bandshell area.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the beauty of the trails in various seasons. She also suggested placing some focus on the Statue Row area along Perkiomen Avenue and the Maine Anchor located on the North 11th Street side of City Park.

Ms. Burkovich noted that the Park contains many features that could be featured with a downloadable app or QR code.

Mr. Olsen suggested developing a plan for the design of the Pagoda Trail signs and an estimate for the signs required, then approaching the DoubleTree about a contribution towards the signage and the addition of shuttle service for those who only wish to travel the trail in one direction. All present agreed.

5. Update of Coordinated Approach to Dumping

Mr. Pottiger stated that there is no update.

Ms. Showers stated that she has been following up on the meeting with the Joint Purchasing Council about seeing if any other municipalities have the need for an independent contractor to assist with illegal dumping. She stated that she had 18 responses and approximately nine are interested in having a joint contract. Those interested said that the main items dumped are tires and household contents/appliances approximately 1-5 times per year with the items dumped on both private and public property. Those municipalities with dumping issues have a limited budget to address the issue. Follow up will continue.

6. DCNR Grant Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan

Ms. Showers explained that the MOU was executed and distributed to the partners: the MP3, the City, BAMBA and Berks Nature. She thanked Ms. Kelleher for coordinating. She stated that the grant opens at the end of January 2021 and she will begin coordinating with the partners to get the required information. Mr. Brophy, from the Environmental Committee and Reading Trails offered to assist. The application is due in early April 2021.

7. 2021 Meeting Schedule

After discussion, the following meeting schedule was established. The meetings will begin at 6 pm on the following dates:

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jan 27 th | March 24 th | May 26 th |
| July 28 th | September 22 nd | December 8 th |

Mr. Barnhardt stated that the virtual meetings will continue until further notice.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: reports from the committees are included with the agenda.

1. Finance & Capital

No report; currently working with Public Safety & Environmental on a trail assessment study. County Planning will submit a DCNR grant application to assist with the funding for the trail assessment.

2. Marketing & Promotions

Attached to the agenda.

3. Public Safety Committee

4. Environmental Committee

See Pagoda Trail above.

OTHER MATTERS

Mr. Brophy stated that Mr. Rock is planning a spring clean-up on the mountain in March/April. Additional information will be provided

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:09 pm.

The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be on January 27th 2021 via Zoom at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary

Action Items:

1. Kim, Don and Ashley to develop RFP re Dumping w/ assistance from Mr. Harrity
2. Ashley coordinate the completion of the DCNR Grant re Trail Feasibility and Forest Management (application available the end of Jan and submission required early April)
3. Design the Pagoda Trail signs, determine the number of signs required and prepare an estimate (to be shared with Lee and the DoubleTree)
4. Lee to speak with Craig Poole re shuttle service for the Pagoda Trail
5. City Public Works additional info on the redesign of the Pagoda parking lot & cost