



## **Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership (MP3)**

Board of Director's Meeting

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

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), T. Goodman (Mt. Penn)

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

**Others attending:** B. Burkovich, A. Showers, M. Brophy, D. Hunter, L. Kissinger, A. Amoros, S. Rugis, R. Rock, C. Miller

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 6:00 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.

### **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 attendees present offered comment at this time.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Barnhardt asked the members to consider the minutes from the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting and the agenda for this meeting.

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, to approve the January minutes and the agenda with no changes.**

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Ms. Mallatratt, MP3 COG Treasurer, called attention to the reports distributed electronically and attached to the agenda showing deposits of \$4000 (dues from Reading and Berks County) and expenses of \$513.34 (For GoDaddy website migration and the printing of the brochures) creating a balance of \$29,080.49.

**The Treasurer's Report was approved via acclimation.**

Ms. Mallatratt stated that the domain name expires at the end of April and she explained the purchase options listed below, noting that the most economical approach is the 5 year renewal due to the generous discount.

- 1 Year Renewal: \$21.17
- 2 Year Renewal: \$42.34
- 3 Year Renewal: \$63.51
- 5 Year Renewal: \$74.36 with discount code available until March 31, 2021. Otherwise, cost would be \$105.85.

**Mr. Barnhardt moved, seconded by Ms. Kelleher, to approve the purchase of the 5 year domain name renewal. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Ms. Mallatratt inquired if the group wished to approve the \$250 annual membership fee with the PA COG Association. The group has a brief discussion about the membership benefits.

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Mr. Barnhardt, to discontinue the PA COG membership at this point in time. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Mr. Barnhardt noted the need to modify the agenda by adjusting the order of reports listed on the agenda due to the availability of some individuals.

**MP3 COG REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

**G. Rehab of Mineral Spring Park**

Mr. Miller stated that Reading Rotary was formed in 1913 and held their first meeting at the Mineral Spring Hotel, so the building and park have historical significance to the organization. He stated that in 1914 the organization purchased Pendorf Park and donated it to the City. He explained that the organization performs community service projects annually. One of the largest was the organization's purchase of Rotary Park in the 1980s for \$100,000. While considering long-term initiatives, the organization is interested in projects in Mineral Spring Park, although the group has not yet decided how much they will take on. He noted that their commitment could be anywhere from adopting pavilions for general maintenance or rebuilding the pavilions so they are historically intact to adopting the park in perpetuity. While the group considers this issue, they are considering holding their meetings in the park. He noted that the organization has the ability to apply for grants for their projects and provide matching funds.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Reading Rotary for considering projects in Mineral Spring Park, as that area is part of the MP3 area. She suggested starting with the addition of trash receptacles in the park that could be imprinted with the Reading Rotary and MP3 logos.

In response to a question from Mr. Olsen, Mr. Miller stated that the group has walked through the area and noticed that some pavilions were damaged by falling trees and limbs and some

have been rebuilt but not restored to their original appearance. He stated that all options are being considered.

Mr. Kissinger stated that a project to remove dead trees/limbs took place two years ago in the park area.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that Rotary consult with Public Works as they consider projects in the park.

#### **D. Update of Coordinated Approach to Dumping**

Mr. Pottiger stated that the draft RFP will be completed between the end of March and the end of April. He noted that over the winter months dumping in the Preserve area was not a big problem; however, a refrigerator was recently removed from Antietam Park near the dam breast.

#### **A. Resolution Authorizing the Execution of the Trails Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan Grant Application**

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, to authorize the Chair to execute the grant applications. The motion was approved unanimously.**

##### **1. Traffic Shift at the Pagoda Parking Lot**

The plan for the traffic shift was displayed via screen share. Mr. Rugis explained that the redesign of the area will close the southbound lane running through the Pagoda parking lot and relocate it to the eastern side of the rock island. He stated that a Lower Alsace official expressed concern that the turn at the island is too narrow for two cars. However, Mr. Rugis explained that this is a City road and the radius meets the City's criteria. He noted that the City consulted with Gannet Fleming about this project and they helped identify the simplest plan to allow the shift in traffic patterns and provide ADA compliance.

Mr. Rugis stated that some areas required widening, the addition of a stop sign at Duryea and Skyline, the removal of the 10x12 island and brush clearing to make the shift possible. The shift will allow the installation of three metal gates to close the parking area to through traffic between dusk and dawn when the park is closed. Speed bumps will not be added. He thanked Mr. Kissinger and his team for their work which made it possible to consider the project.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that there are some groups interested in adding flowers in the Pagoda area to brighten the area. Mr. Kissinger noted that some soil amendment would be required to allow new plantings.

Mr. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about the health of the remaining cherry tree on the Pagoda property. She explained why cherry trees are historically appropriate for the property. She noted that if replacement is required, Altrusa is willing to donate a new tree. Mr. Kissinger stated that he would inspect the cherry tree and advise.

### **C. Albright Intern for the MP3 & County Planning**

Mr. Hunter stated that through Ms. Kelleher, Albright's intern program became available to assist the Marketing Committee through the County Planning. He stated that the internship will be virtual due to the pandemic. He inquired about the management of the intern and if there are other work areas to be considered. He explained that there are various types of intern structures and this will be an unpaid intern as the County does not allow paid internships. He stated that a work plan has been prepared. All present expressed support for utilizing the Albright internship program.

### **E. DCNR Grant Trail Feasibility Study and Forest Management Plan**

Ms. Showers stated that she has almost finalized the applications. She stated that the last remaining questions relate to the cost of the study the group wants, the contact person and the need for a vendor ID number.

Ms. Showers explained the study cost types and options, noting that the grant requires matching funds. Mr. Barnhardt stated that the City and County each budgeted \$20K in 2020 and 2021 for this initiative. After some discussion, Mr. Barnhardt expressed the belief that it would be best to apply for the most comprehensive type of study and plan. All present, including Mr. Amoros, agreed.

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt, to apply up to \$40K in matching funds for the feasibility study and forest management plan - \$20K from the City and from the County. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Ms. Showers stated that the MP3 COG has not become a 501c3 so the organization does not have a federal ID number or vendor number. She suggested using either the City or County vendor ID number for the grant. After some discussion, it was decided to use the County's number. ***Note: the next day Ms. Showers found a way to obtain a vendor number for the MP3***

Ms. Showers noted the need to select a project contact and project manager. Mr. Kissinger stated that he would assist with the project management. Ms. Showers stated that she will be the initial contact but that when the project begins the contact designation will need to shift to someone who is knowledgeable about the project needs.

## **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. Ms. Burkovich reported that the printing of the brochures is complete and website migration is in progress. The organization phone number has been added. Ms. Mallatratt and Ms. Burkovich stated that the marketing group is researching mobile apps for the Preserve area.

### **3. Public Safety Committee**

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

### **4. Environmental Committee**

See Pagoda Trail and Feasibility Study above. Mr. Brophy stated that the sign design and number of signs are finalized. Mr. Olsen is arranging a meeting with Mr. Poole about obtaining the Double Tree's sponsorship of the signs. He also noted that Mr. Rock is planning a Duryea cleanup on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kissinger noted that there are several cleanups planned for the Preserve area and suggested posting the schedule. Ms. Burkovich stated that if the City provides that information it can be posted on the Facebook page.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Brophy noted the need for additional parking in the Skyline area for those using the trail systems. He questioned why the Fire Tower property is now totally gated. Mr. Kissinger stated that the area was gated to prevent inappropriate behavior on the property noting that there has been property damage and vandalism.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that there is also communications equipment on the property that requires security.

Mr. Kissinger asked Mr. Brophy to provide him with a few days advance notice when groups will be using the trails and he can have various parking areas opened for parking, eliminating parking along the roadways.

Ms. Showers stated that the County is updating the Antietam Master Plan and MP3 and City contacts for input are needed. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Mr. Kissinger volunteered.

Mr. Rock questioned why the Fire Tower property is gated. Mr. Kissinger stated there have been activities on the property that have required police response.

**Mr. Olsen moved, seconded by Ms. Mallatratt, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:27 pm.**

The next regular meeting of the MP3 COG will be on May 26<sup>th</sup> 2021 via Zoom at 6 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary*

**Action Items:**

1. Don to finalize the RFP re Dumping w/ assistance from Steve Harrity and Kim by the end of April & advertise
2. Ashley to finalize and submit the DCNR Grant re Trail Feasibility and Forest Management with MOA partners (MP3 Application review March mtg and application due April 14<sup>th</sup>)
3. Lee to speak with Craig Poole re sponsorship of Pagoda trail signs and shuttle service for the Pagoda Trail
4. City Public Works to work with Rick Rock to avoid disruptions with Pagoda Hillclimb scheduled for June 26-27 and Duryea Hillclimb for August 21-22 re the traffic shift at the Pagoda Parking Lot
5. City Public Works to send Beth & Linda cleanups and other volunteer projects scheduled for the preserve area so they can be added to the online calendar
6. Linda & Kim to finalize the 501c3 application
7. Reminder for City, Alsace & Lower Alsace Twps to coordinate the event permitting process and reporting events to Beth & Linda so they can be added to the online calendar