

## Mount Penn Preserve Update: August 5, 2016

**On behalf of Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt and Lee Olsen:**

GREETINGS MOUNT PENN PRESERVE SUPPORTERS!!!!!!

We hope your summer isn't going as fast as ours is!!

It has been just 3 months since we all assembled up at Stokesay Castle and had a great community dialog about what you collectively thought of the value of Mount Penn in the context of a natural resource asset, its natural beauty, its recreational attributes, both passive and active, and its potential. We heard many of you support the idea of organizing an initiative to once and for all, "corral " all of this positive energy and do something.

So here is what we have done!!

- 1 )** We have raised the \$ 1,500.00 required match money for a \$15,000.00 grant from the National Association of Realtors with their Smart Growth Grant Application process. With the able assistance of Wes Stefanik from the Reading-Berks Association of Realtors, that application was successfully submitted on Wednesday, August 3, 2016. According to Wes, we should hear back from the NAR within 30 days. The contributors to the grant were the Pagoda Foundation, Pagoda Skyline, Inc., Olsen DESIGN Group Architects, and a generous anonymous donor. Thank you all!
- 2 )** Once we get the good news that we have been approved, Kevin and I will set up a "Charrette Committee " to start the process of organizing a 1 ½ day event this fall. We have identified a few facilitators regionally who are familiar with the mountain and would be willing to assist us at a reduced rate. The outcome of this event will be a report, with graphics, delineating how the community at large sees the mountain being best utilized, an action plan with a schedule, and an overview of its potential organizational management.
- 3 )** With this planning document in our hands, we then continue our fund raising efforts to secure the \$3,000.00 match for a \$ 15,000.00 grant from DCNR for a "PEER TO PEER " Charrette through the Berks County Planning Commission. This event brings to us those from the State who have done similar projects and/or who run public recreational areas. This we hope to organize and execute in the spring of 2017.
- 4 )** Kevin and I are on the Agendas of the following local municipalities to share the good news of our grant application and to ask them for their financial support.... August 11<sup>th</sup> at Lower Alsace, August 17<sup>th</sup> at Alsace Township, August 22<sup>nd</sup> at the City of Reading. Mt. Penn Borough and the County will be visited in September.

So, as you can see, we have made progress and inroads into making our initiative a reality.

We will send out the good news about our being awarded the planning grant as soon as it comes in! In the meantime, if you are so inclined and want to help us with a donation for the DCNR grant, please send your check, made out to the Pagoda Foundation to either Kevin or Lee, (see addresses below). We both appreciate your help in helping us.....see you on the Mountain!!!!!!

Lee Olsen + Kevin Barnhardt

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