

Mt. Penn Preserve Steering Committee Meeting

Thursday, November 9, 2017

Liederkrantz

7 pm

Attending: K. Mallatratt (Alsace & Governance Committee), M. Dudash (Mt. Penn, Governance & Marketing Committees), C. Crupi (Lower Alsace & Pagoda Skyline & Public Safety & Environmental Committees), L. Kelleher (City, CHCC, Governance & Public Safety Committees), S. Rossman (County Planning & Governance Committee), M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (City and Pagoda Foundation, Governance Committee), M. Reinert (Pagoda Skyline & Marketing Committee), P Schleicher (Hessian Camp Community Council), A. Showers (County Planning & Finance Committee), B. Burkovich (County Planning & Marketing Committee), P. Kline (Alsace Twp & Public Safety Committee), Rich Rock (Environmental Committee), D. Reed (Marketing Committee), C. Seitz (Marketing Committee), S. Rose (Environmental Committee), J. Blatt (Hessian Camp Community Council), S. Stewart (Reading Gravity Railroad), T. Coleman (Governance Committee), E. Gensemer (Aulenbach's Cemetery), T. Orth (Lower Alsace & Public Safety Committee), C. Ramponella (Environmental Committee), R. Rock (Environmental Committee), A. Sellers (Environmental Committee)

Mr. Olsen called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. As a reminder, the Master Plan and event calendar is available at www.MtPennPreserve.org.

Mr. Olsen stated that the group decided to form five (5) committees to begin working on Mt. Penn Preserve issues:

1. Marketing & Promotions
2. Finance & Capital
3. Governance
4. Public Safety
5. Environmental

Mr. Olsen stated that chairs were assigned to each committee and were asked to meet prior to tonight's meeting. He asked the committee reps present to provide reports on their meetings.

Governance – Kim Mallatratt & Linda Kelleher, Co Chairs

Ms. Mallatratt reported that the committee held two (2) meetings to date and are working to finalize the COG Agreement which will be circulated to the five municipal partners - Alsace & Lower Alsace Townships, Mt. Penn Borough, the City of Reading and the County. Mr. Olsen added that a portion of Carsonia Park is located within Exeter but owned by the Mt. Penn Water Authority. He stated that he and Mr. Barnhardt will be reaching out to Exeter officials to find out if they are interested in joining the Mt. Penn Preserve.

Ms. Mallatratt explained that the committee decided to name the organization the MP3 – Mt. Penn Preserve Partnership. The five (5) partners will need to adopt the ordinance and attached agreement to participate in the COG. She explained that the draft agreement defines the purpose and mission of the MP3 along with the organizational structure of the group. She noted that the committee is currently considering which issues should be in the agreement adopted by the partners and which belong in the bylaws controlled by the MP3 COG Executive Committee.

Ms. Kelleher stated that at the last meeting the committee decided to have the MP3 Committees work on issues and make reports and recommendations that can be vetted by this Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will then make a final recommendation to the MP3 Executive Committee, composed of representatives from the five (5) partner municipalities, for final action. In some cases the MP3 Executive Committee will be able to act on its own and in others the Executive Committee will need to seek approval from the partners.

Mr. Olsen explained that as the COG is a governmental entity they do not need to form a 501c3 and they can perform fundraising under the auspices of the Pagoda Foundation or Pagoda Skyline.

Marketing – Beth Burkovich, Chair

Ms. Burkovich stated that the Marketing Committee met immediately before the start of this meeting. She stated that they will initially define their mission and vision statements, then define a consistent name for the Preserve area. The new name can be

used to build branding and a logo that will help to enhance the experience of those who consider visiting the area. She stated that the committee has reviewed some similar areas such as Mt. Nittany.

Ms. Burkovich reported that Ms. Reed will ask Daniel Laws and Kim Worley if they will provide assistance. She asked the group present to provide thoughts on the meaning of the area, in summary:

- Historical significance of the area
- Enhancement of the area – preservation, commercial and residential
- Coordinated promotion of the area
- Enhance the future use of the area
- Promote the area’s natural environment

Public Safety – Phil Kline, Chair

Mr. Kline reported that the committee met last week and has another meeting scheduled for November 15th. He stated that during the meeting the group defined a target list of initiatives.

Increase/Improve Perception of Safety

- Emergency Call Stations & More Security Cameras – more information is needed on the number of drug arrests made on Skyline Dr. to determine if drug forfeiture money from the DA can be used for stations or cameras
- Coordinated signage – using the specs used by Berks Nature

Increased Patrol

- Work with the County to get more Park Rangers to patrol
- Investigate cost of Act 173 Certification for Park Rangers

Coordinated Law Enforcement

- Ask Lower Alsace & Reading to authorize Reading Police & Central Berks to perform coordinated enforcement that crosses over municipal boundaries
- Ask the County, Reading, Lower Alsace & Alsace to adopt the same regulations that apply to the Preserve area re Park regs, hunting regs, firearms, no ATVs, etc.
- Coordinated signage about regulations
- Create map defining conservation land and clear municipal boundaries

Improved Traffic Controls

- Closing off Skyline Drive at List Rd. to Pagoda
- Consider removing island at Pagoda to control flow of traffic and create ability to close off Pagoda Parking during “closed” hours

Coordinated Permitting

- Review Reading, Berks, Alsace & Lower Alsace event permitting and create one application that will be reviewed by all five municipalities during the approval process
- Add permit fee that will come back to the Preserve & support security, patrols, etc.
- Move races requiring closure of Skyline to road behind the Fire Tower – seek funding for repaving of the road

Mr. Kline noted that the group also discussed the need for broad public education on regulations for the Preserve area. Mr. Coleman suggested that the group consider the preserve's proximity to areas frequented by youth and explore if the creation of Drug Zones are possible, which would be a deterrent to some criminal activity.

Environmental – Shannon Rose for Mike Frankhouser, Chair

Ms. Rose stated that the committee held one (1) meeting and discussed the need to identify the types of flora and fauna on the mountain. The group also talked about the need to develop a tag or some type of identifying document that could be worn by those who are holding permitted events on the mountain so rangers and police can easily identify those who are holding permitted events. She also noted the need to consider adding a security deposit to the permitting process to improve stewardship and responsibility for those holding events.

Ms. Rose stated that the group discussed developing an app that highlights trails and other features in the area. The app could also help the users identify when they cross a municipal boundary or crossed onto protected or private property.

The need to find a balance between being technically friendly and disconnected was discussed at length.

Mr. Olsen reported that the Finance Committee has not yet met. He stated that committees are expected to continue meeting and make reports to the Steering Committee.

Meeting Schedule

- Thursday, December 14th at 7 pm at the Pagoda - *Those attending can bring beer or wine if they so choose.*
- Thursday, January 11th at 7 pm

- Thursday, February 8th at 7 pm
- Thursday, March 8th at 7 pm

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk