

MINUTES
MERCER COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Hybrid Meeting: Tuesday – November 26, 2024 - 7:30 p.m.

MUNICIPALITY	PRESENT	Online *	ABSENT
FARRELL CITY	Venesta Kirk	*	Lynda Moss-McDougall
HERMITAGE CITY	Jeremy Coxe		James Holl
SHARON CITY	Stephen Theiss	*	
CLARK BOROUGH	Alesha Culp	*	Maryjo Harakal
FREDONIA BOROUGH	Patricia McAdams		Ron Anthony
GREENVILLE TOWN	Paul Hamill Matt Breedlove		
GROVE CITY BOROUGH			
JACKSON CENTER BOROUGH			Robert Egger
JAMESTOWN BOROUGH			
MERCER BOROUGH	Nick Sicilian		Debbie Sarvis
NEW LEBANON BOROUGH			Darlene Slemenda
SANDY LAKE BOROUGH			Glenn Leech
SHARPSVILLE BOROUGH	Nicholas Hanahan		
STONEBORO BOROUGH	Roger Patterson	*	Jennifer Medberry
WEST MIDDLESEX BOROUGH	Robert Lark		Stacey Curry
COOLSPRING TOWNSHIP	Corwin Masson Tom Sauer		
DELAWARE TOWNSHIP	William Anthony		
E. LACKAWANNOCK TOWNSHIP	William Hackwelder	*	
FAIRVIEW TOWNSHIP			Robin Hostetler Mont Clark
FINDLEY TOWNSHIP			John Courtney Steve Paxton
HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP	Lisa Holm		Todd Hittle
JACKSON TOWNSHIP			George McIntire Diane Tice
JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP	Richard McCullough		
LAKE TOWNSHIP	Steve Tingley		
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP	Dave Beatty		Joseph Matthews
NEW VERNON TOWNSHIP			Daniel L. Patterson
OTTER CREEK TOWNSHIP	Paulette Young	*	Carl Swartz
PERRY TOWNSHIP	Bonnie McCartney	*	Gary King
PINE TOWNSHIP	Todd Spears		Dennis Crumb
PYMATUNING TOWNSHIP			Jim Rowe Ryan Zarecky
SANDY LAKE TOWNSHIP			Raymond Scofield Heather Bacher
SHENANGO TOWNSHIP	Dale Perry Matthew Stefanak		
S. PYMATUNING TOWNSHIP	Mourine Rodgers		Matthew Chalupka
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP	Tim Stiffy		Marcus Kohan
WILMINGTON TOWNSHIP			Robert Steingrabe Sharen Brown
WOLF CREEK TOWNSHIP			Charles Weber John Ligo
MERCER COUNTY	Sheryl Kelly Larry McAdams Richard Stachel	*	Jared Grandy Elliot Lengel Jeff Hoy

MUNICIPALITY	PRESENT	Online *	ABSENT
MERCER COUNTY			Jay Russell
BOROUGH ASSOCIATION			
SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION			
COUNTY COMMISSIONER	Tim McGonigle Ann Coleman		
Solicitor	James Nevant, II		
<u>STAFF</u>		<u>OTHERS PRESENT</u>	
Daniel Gracenin, Executive Director		Matt Breedlove- Greenville	
Brian Barnhizer, Senior Planner*		Shawn McLaughlin- Mercer County GIS	
Lisa Holm, Senior Planner		Kevin Cameron- Coolspring	
Elizabeth Peluchette, Planner		John Struthers	
Doniele Russell		Norma Struthers	
Peter Messina, Planner		Sean Carfollow	
Chris Conti, Planner		Shelley Carfollow	
		Amy Cameron	
		Dan Cameron	
		Ken Struthers	
		Micah Wilpula- Coolspring	
		Ed Kelly – Coolspring	
		Eric Lawrence – Coolspring	
		Kevin Arrow- Coolspring	
		Michele Arrow – Coolspring	
		Brian Jewell – Coolspring	
		Joe McEwan	
		Jamie Lorwich	
		Dale Bestwick	

CALL TO ORDER-

Paul Hamill, chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-

Matthew Stefanak, vice-chairman, led the Commission in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE SIGN IN-

A roll call was taken verbally and it was noted that **a quorum was present.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ANY AGENDA ITEM-

Public comments on any agenda item – Paul Hamill, chairman. Paul noted that any members of the public present are allowed to speak and this is their opportunity to speak during the meeting.

1. Dale Bestwick- asked if we could clarify what is exclusionary and if a recommendation of 500 ft. could be made.
2. Ken Struthers- why isn't the recommendation to follow your zoning ordinance?
3. Shelley Carfollow- Coolspring is only allowing this in Ag and residential districts and the MPC clearly states to protect property values and class I and class II farmlands.

Paul Hamill informed the attendees that our role is to make recommendations on the items presented to us and that the municipality has the authority to make the final decision.

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 MEETING-

A motion was made by Dave Beatty and seconded by Richard McCullough, to approve the Minutes of the September 24, 2024 meeting. **Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried.**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – Steve Tingley, committee treasurer.

Steve Tingley presented the September and October Financial Statements.

Steve Tingley made a motion, seconded by Tom Sauer, to approve the September and October 2024 financial statements as presented. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried.

STAFF REPORTS-

Chris Conti, senior planner reported the City of Farrell and Mercer County's CDBG application. He stated that the County's application includes the communities of Greenville, Pine, Grove City, and Sharpsville.

Dan Gracenin introduced Doniele Russell as the new executive director starting January 1, 2024. Doniele thanked the board and welcomed the opportunity to meet with all the members and the community. She reminded the members that the County will be starting the Countywide Comprehensive Plan in January and it's their opportunity to have their voices heard and it's time to get to work.

Zoning & subdivision review committee report – Larry McAdams, committee chairman

All documents are available online <https://www.mcrpc.com/review-committee/>.

- ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT – CITY OF HERMITAGE** – A zoning Ordinance Map amendment was presented to rezone 2 parcels from R-2 to City Center. The properties are located near the southwest corner of the intersection of State Street and Buhl Farm Drive. The proposal meets zoning amendment criteria to be compatible with community objectives.

Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Rich McCullough, to recommend the City of Hermitage adopt the zoning map amendment as presented. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried. Jeremy Coxe abstained.
- FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS for MC SOLAR - WEST SALEM TOWNSHIP** – Final plans are complete for the project. Other required permits and approvals are noted on the Final plans for recording. The preliminary layout for this site was accepted in August 2023 and the project has obtained the other required approvals and permits as required. Final plans include the necessary Emergency Access Routes and are complete with signatures as required for recording.

Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Dale Perry, to approve the land development plans for MC SOLAR in WEST SALEM TOWNSHIP as required for recording. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried with Paulette Young voting no.
- ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT- COOLSPRING** - Coolspring Township updated its zoning in 2019 and added energy generation amendments in 2023. The following amendments are considered separately:

- I. **Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Nick Hanahan, to recommend the township adjust the energy generation facility setbacks to 200 feet from an existing primary residential structure on or off-site. Paul Hamill called for discussion.** Tom Sauer asked if we could discuss the Map that was provided to Coolspring Township. Elizabeth Peluchette discussed the GIS map that showed the parcel numbers and the properties that meet the 500 ft setback from all property lines. There being no more discussion, **Paul Hamill called for a vote; the motion carried with Tom Sauer and Nick Sicilian voting no. Corwin Masson abstained.**
- II. **Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Nick Hanahan, to recommend the township adjust the definition to POWER inverter to refer to ALL types of Energy generation facilities and add a setback for the Power INVERTER within a facility to 500 feet from all property lines. [energy gen SYSTEM is private]. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; The motion carried with Tom Sauer, Todd Spears, and Nick Sicilian voting no. Corwin Masson abstained.**
- III. **Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Richard McCullough, to recommend the township increase road setbacks to 100' from the centerline for all public roads. Paul Hamill called for discussion.** Steve Tingley asked if the wording should state township or state roads. The language says "public roads". William Anthony asked if Coolspring Township has the right to establish setbacks on state highways through their zoning. William Anthony received multiple yes responses. **Paul Hamill called for a vote; the motion carried with Tom Sauer, Steve Tingley, and William Anthony voting no. Corwin Masson abstained.**
- IV. **Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Tom Sauer, to recommend the township remove the minimum square footage for a dwelling (currently 750 square feet) AND reference meeting Current Building Codes. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried.**
4. **ZONING MAP AMENDMENT- NEW VERNON-** from a property owner for a SINGLE parcel from R- Rural Residential to B- Business-travel. The property is located adjacent to I-79 on Lake Wilhelm Road about half a mile west of Goddard State Park facilities. The current Zoning ordinance is from 1995 with a few prior map amendments. **Larry McAdams made a motion, seconded by Nick Hanahan, to NOT recommend that New Vernon Township rezone if it is only a single property because it is spot zoning and suggested New Vernon Township consider the overall ordinance review to include more current provisions. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried.**

Personnel and Finance Committee Report-

1. Retirements & Advertisement for a new hire-

The committee discussed the retirement of Dan Gracenin and Brian Barnhizer effective December 31, 2024.

Patty McAdams made a motion, seconded by Steve Tingley to accept the retirement of Dan Gracenin and Brian Barnhizer. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried.

Patty McAdams stated committee also recommended advertising for a planner to replace Brian Barnhizer.

2. 2025 MCRPC Staff Salaries-

Patty McAdams stated the Personnel and Finance Committee also discussed salary increases for the staff. The committee recommends a five percent increase for all the staff and raise the administrative secretary’s base pay increased to \$37,500.00.

Patty McAdams made a motion, seconded by Steve Tingley, approve the wage increases for the staff as stated. Paul Hamill called for discussion. A member requested the estimated amount of the 5% increase. Dan Gracenin stated the increases would be \$2,300.00 to 2,900.00 per staff member with the secretaries being more than the 5% at \$4,500.00. **Paul Hamill called for a vote and the motion carried with Lisa Holm abstaining.**

3. 2025 MCRPC Preliminary/Final Budget-

Patty McAdams reported the committee reviewed the preliminary/Final budgets and recommended approval of the 2025 preliminary and final budgets as presented. **Patty McAdams made a motion, seconded by Steve Tingley, to approve the 2025 budgets. Paul Hamill called for discussion.** Dan Gracenin discussed the details of the 2025 budget and asked if there were any questions. Jeremy Coxe asked if the budget material had been sent in the materials packet. Dan Gracenin explained it had not due to the Personnel Finance Committee met after the packets were mailed. **Paul Hamill called for a vote and the motion carried.**

2023 MCRPC Audit- Dan Gracenin, Executive Director

Dan Gracenin summarized the 2023 Audit noting that it was a clean audit and there were no findings. He asked members to pick up their community copies at the end of the meeting. We will be mailing copies to those members that aren’t in attendance.

Patty McAdams made a motion, seconded by Dave Beatty, to approve the 2023 audit. Paul Hamill called for a vote and the motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report- Dan Gracenin, Executive Director

Dan Gracenin noted the floor is now open until the December meeting if anyone would like to be on the Executive Board. It was also noted that the existing board can hold another term if they would like to. An email was sent to all existing board members requesting to notify the office of their wishes before the December 17 meeting.

Discussion

Reminder the December 17 meeting will be catered so please let our office know if you are attending.

Adjournment

With no further business or discussion, **Richard McCullough made a motion, seconded by Dave Beatty, to adjourn at 8:21. Paul Hamill called for discussion; there being none, a vote was called for; the motion carried.**

Submitted and Certified By:

_____ William Anthony, Secretary – MCRPC

Date: _____