



Blair Planning

Blair County Planning Commission
Altoona Metropolitan Planning Organization
Blair County Government Advisory Committee

BLAIR COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting of February 23, 2023, 8:30 AM

Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call – The meeting will begin with a roll call of the members to publicly determine who is present as well as determine if a quorum is present.
2. Approval of Minutes – The Minutes of the January 26, 2023 will be considered for approval.
3. Public Comment Period – Public comment will be received at this time.
4. Commissioner Liaison Forum – This is an opportunity for the Commissioners' liaison to make any reports, comments, or findings to the Planning Commission.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

5. Mona L. Ferris and PTV 1286, LLC Lot Merge and New Dollar General Store -located at the corner of 58th Street and Sixth Avenue in the City of Altoona. The proposed development plan includes a lot merge and development of four (4) adjoining parcels. Construction of a new, 9, 100 sf store, landscaping, sidewalks and paved parking.
6. Roselawn Parking and Storage Development Plan -located along Roselawn Avenue in the City of Altoona. This plan proposes a paved, parking expansion to the 58th Street Shopping Plaza and two (2) 2,100-square foot storage buildings with 14 rental units in each of the two storage buildings. Associated gravel drives, additional sidewalks and landscaping improvements are also proposed.
7. Cresco Sunnyside Land Development -located along Plank Road in Logan Township. This proposal is for the development of a licensed medical marijuana dispensary in the former K-Mart Auto Service facility. The proposal includes architectural updates to the building's current façade and the addition of sidewalks and improvements to the site's existing parking facilities.
8. Staff Level Reviews – Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following applications since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these applications prior to response letters being sent:
 - Antis Township: Scott McElheny and Nadine Shade Subdivision Plan
 - Antis Township: Todd Himes Minor Land Development
 - Catharine Township: Jamie S. Smith Minor Lot Re-Subdivision
 - Frankstown Township: Kent & Elizabeth Shade Minor Subdivision
 - Logan Township: Winrick Subdivision and Lot Consolidation
 - Tyrone Township: Allen and Marcella Blackie Lot Merge
 - Woodbury Township: England Family Partnership
 - Duncansville Borough: Jeff Long Minor Subdivision
 - Hollidaysburg Borough: Kramer and Freedom Storage Rentals Lot Line Relocation

ACTIONS BY GOVERNING BODIES

9. Hollidaysburg Borough: Amend the Hollidaysburg Borough Stormwater Management Ordinance, Chapter 22. The proposed amendment would delete the existing Section 509 of their stormwater management in favor of replacing it with the new Hollidaysburg Borough Stormwater Management Ordinance.
10. Taylor Township – New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co., Inc. – Application to Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection – Industrial Minerals Mine Permit Application amendment to lower quarry flow to an elevation of 600' MSL from ~850' MSL.

METROPOLITAN CLEARINGHOUSE

11. Staff Level Reviews – Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following requests since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these requests prior to response letters being sent:
 - Greenfield Township: First Energy Service Company – Buckeye RCT-1 Guy Wire Utility Crossing Project, PA EPA, General Permit 5 Application
 - Greenfield Township: Peoples Natural Gas Co, LLC – Bedford Street and Mainline Alley Intersection
 - Linear Pipeline Relocation Utility Line Crossing Project, PA EPA, General Permit 5 Application
 - Juniata Township: Duke Energy – North Allegheny Wind Repower Project, PA EPA, Chapter 102 Permit
 - Taylor Township: Walters Auto Wrecking – PA DEP NPDES Permit Renewal Application
 - Hollidaysburg Borough: EADS Group – Clark Street Sanitary Sewer Phase 3 Improvement Project, PA DEP Water Quality Management Phase II Permit Application
 - Tyrone Borough: Vitro Automotive Glass – PA DEP, State-Only Operating Permit Renewal Application

Letters of Support –

- City of Altoona: 25th Street and 7th Avenue Signal Improvements and intersection Upgrades Project, PennDOT 2023 Green Light-Go Grant Application, \$695,987.30
- Blair Township: Applewood Sewer Replacement Project, PA DCED Commonwealth Financing Authority for Small Water and Sewer Grant Application
- Roaring Spring: Source Water Pumping, PA H2O Grant, Commonwealth Financing Authority
- Roaring Spring: Asbestos Waterline Replacement, PA Small Water and Sewer Grant, Commonwealth Financing Authority

GRANTS

12. Frankstown Township Memorial Park Improvements Project (Geeseytown) -DCNR Park Rehabilitation and Development program grant application.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

13. Active Mobility Committee – Creation of a committee of community members to study and aggregate the myriad plans, ideas, and documents relative to active mobility throughout the County, including pedestrian, bicycle, nonmotorized vehicles, greenways, sidewalks, trails, and similar items for citizens in all stages and walks of life.
14. Floodplain Administration – Creation of a committee to consider how and where to implement a countywide floodplain administrator.
15. Planning Director's Report – The Planning Director will give a brief update on professional development and administrative issues for the organization, including (but not limited to):
 - Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
 - Municipal Outreach
 - Alleghenies Ahead Update
 - Local Share Reorganization
16. Planning Commissioners' Forum - This is an opportunity for Planning Commission members to bring items of relevant interest to the attention of the body as a whole.

17. Questions from the Media – This is an opportunity for the media to ask any questions needed to clarify any points made or agenda items discussed during the meeting.

18. Upcoming Events:

- March 3-5 – Home Show, Blair County Convention Center
- March 7 – Altoona Comprehensive Plan Bid Opening, City Hall
- March 14 – PennDOT Pedalcycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Online
- March 20 – GAC meeting, 6:30 to 8:00 PM, Logan Township Municipal Building
- March 29 – WPC Hollidaysburg Advisory Committee, 1PM, Hollidaysburg Library

ADJOURNMENT

The next board meeting is scheduled for 8:30 AM on March 30, 2023 at the Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania.



BLAIR COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes for February 23, 2023

Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania

CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call --

Members present:

William R. Hall, Chairperson
James M. Dixon, Treasurer
Patrick Baechle
Lawrence Carter
Thomas M. Holsinger
Bruce Erb

Members absent:

Herbert Shelow, Sr. Secretary
Benjamin Postles
Linda Smith
Randall Isenberg

Solicitor:

Absent

Guests:

Walt Frank
Steve Weaver
Dave Chesney
Tim Laird
Rodney Green
Larry Lashinsky
Adam Charles
Dan Carbaugh
Jerry Green
Carol A. Dannenberg

Staff:

David McFarland III, Planning Director
Sherry Socie, Strategic Planner
MacKenzie Caron, Community Planner
Jamie L. Klink, Regional Planner
Rhonda Kelly, Planning Aide

Staff Absent:

Wesley L. Burket, Transportation Planner

Representing:

Townships Collectively
City of Altoona
Boroughs Collectively
City of Altoona
Townships Collectively
Commissioner Liaison

Boroughs Collectively
Townships Collectively
Townships Collectively
RESIGNED

Altoona Mirror
Roaring Spring Municipal Authority
Taylor Township
Taylor Township
Roaring Spring Borough
Roaring Spring Borough
Roaring Spring Borough Municipal Authority
Roaring Spring Borough Municipal Authority
Trout Unlimited
Hollidaysburg Community Watchdog Group

2. Approval of Minutes - The minutes of the January 26, 2023 Blair Planning Board meeting were considered for approval.

Motion: To approve the January 26, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes, for Item #2 of this agenda:

Moved: Thomas Holsinger

Seconded: James Dixon

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

3. Public Comment Period – No public comment was heard at this time.
4. Commissioner Liaison Forum – No report at this time.

ITEM #10 AHEAD ON AGENDA

For convenience of the guests present, Chairman Hall directed that Item #10, New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co, Inc. be discussed at this time. New Enterprise submitted a request to PA DEP to amend its Industrial Minerals Mine Permit for the quarry located in Taylor Township. Chairman Hall stated the Planning Commission is not a regulatory authority that it provides comment on subdivision/land development plans only in terms of consistency with the Alleghenies Ahead Plan.

The PA DEP sent a notice to the Blair County Planning Commission of the amendment request submitted by New Enterprise. The DEP included details of the amendment and provided the opportunity to submit comments. Community Planner MacKenzie Caron explained that the requested amendment to the Industrial Minerals Mine permit is to allow for deepening the Roaring Spring quarry in Taylor Township. The proposed new elevation is 600 feet mean sea level, a drop from the current 900 to 850 feet. Ms. Caron stated that this deepening can have undesirable environmental effects on the local ground water supply; however, the analysis reflects proposed changes would be implemented over several decades. The change in volume of the spring appears to be marginal increments over the stated time span. Ms. Caron said that provided this is the case and that there is no possibility of a loss of water service to the surrounding communities served by the spring, then the current, proposed project is an approved land use type for that area, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She emphasized, *if*, there is not the possibility of loss of water service to the surrounding communities.

Chairman Hall questioned why New Enterprise wants to go deeper, not laterally. A representative from Taylor Township commented that limestone can be mined laterally but geo rock contains dolomite, a harder material rated by PennDOT. The representative stated that Taylor Township is in support of New Enterprise, as their community cannot afford to lose jobs at the quarry. Chairman Hall questioned that Taylor Township is aware and willing to accept the possible risks involved, which the representative responded they trust the geologists and environmentalists. Committee member Lawrence Carter asked if a hydrologic impact study was performed. Ms. Caron responded there were two, 2015 and 2020.

Larry Lashinsky, Solicitor for both Roaring Spring Borough and its Municipal Authority stated both the Borough and the Authority are strongly opposed to approval of the permit amendment. Roaring Spring is the community's name and lifeline, with industry and business developed in the community solely based on the water associated with the community. That deepening the quarry risks the water supply of 2,500 customers versus an unheard possibility of 50 job losses. It was noted that Roaring Spring is ok with the project *if, and it is a big if*, the water supply is not affected. Waking up one morning with no water is not comparable to the unheard of possibility of even 50 job losses. Roaring Spring does not believe the accuracy of the science that if they go deeper, that the water supply will be safe, whether in two weeks, months, years or two decades.

Comments/questions were heard from Mr. Carter, Mr. Baechle and Chairman Hall regarding New Enterprise providing a municipal guarantee and contingency plan, of which should be in place if it is decided to move forward with this plan. The Planning Commission's response letter will include questions that have been raised at today's meeting.

Jerry Green spokesman for Trout Unlimited, expressed they have had ongoing concern since 2006 – 2008 due to the two, Class A (high quality, cold water) wild trout streams (Plum and Halter Creeks) running through New Enterprise's property. He explained that the effects of the 2006-2008 permit for New Enterprise resulted in de-watering the streams. DEP regulations classify de-watering as polluting the streams. For example, a plastic pipe installed at the Whitesel spring area has well water flowing out, this indicates diminished spring flow and is below guaranteed flows.

Dan Carbaugh of Keller Engineers expressed their concern that they did not have time to investigate. They raise the question if the Bureau of Mines acted on their own or had they contacted the Division of Water Quality and other authorities. Mr.

Carbaugh stated there is much rigmarole for permitting when developing a new water source and noted that it is odd that the Water Quality Division did not provide comments.

Chairman Hall stated several times through this discussion the Planning Board welcomes comment letters, whether in support of or opposition to.

Rodney Green, Roaring Spring Council added to their solicitor Mr. Lashinsky's comments that the Roaring Spring's water source and municipal authority serves customers in the Borough and in the Township and along with expansion of a business, there is pride and heritage in the Borough. He commented that as they transition from the closing of the Appvion Mill, they are hopeful for additional development, noting the mill closing affected payroll in Blair County overall, not just in the Borough. The transition might not be more industry, rather tourism business, such as the new brewery. The brewery chose to locate in Roaring Spring because of the water quality. Mr. Green stated additional business inquiries have been made about the water quality. He stated that they are not anti-New Enterprise or anti new development but recognize the need for a balance in the petition/permit process. It seems there have been some short cuts and they want to ensure the 't's' are crossed and 'l's' are dotted and Roaring Spring appreciates the opportunity to provide written comment/testimony. He noted that Roaring Spring is probably the most studied aquifer in the eastern part of the United States because of all the permits. He believes it is not a lack of documentation but a lack of communication and they want to clear that up assurances for contingencies, including a water replacement process, which takes a lot of time. They want to see it in black and white.

Mr. Lashinsky commented on the Planning Commission's role to determine a plan's consistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The quality of the water supply should be essential to any comprehensive plan, especially for a community built around water. He further commented that a guarantee that the water supply is protected is essential and should be consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan; if it is not, something is wrong with the Plan. A comment made referenced that this would assist New Enterprise but if on the other end something happens to the water supply, what happens to Smith Trucking company employees.

The Taylor Township representative responded to a Board member's request for clarification on the water flow in the quarry, stating that the 2020 hydrologic study reports there is typically 180 to 220 gallons of water pumped per minute that could be taken out of the spring itself. He explained the cracks and seams in the rock structure is where the water comes from and that the concern is if you hit a seam further down, the water comes out there instead.

Chairman Hall stated that the response letter to the PA DEP will indicate that the Blair County Planning Commission has strong reservations, even though the plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. He emphasized that this meeting today may be the only opportunity for public comment on this plan and he encouraged everyone to provide their written concerns. Chairman Hall explained that written comments will be accepted through 4:00 PM on Monday, February 27, 2023 and those comments will become an addendum to the Planning Commission's response letter to the PA DEP, which will be sent on Tuesday, February 28, 2023.

Chairman Hall stated it is the viewpoint of the Planning Commission is that the plan is an acceptable use of the area and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and would not object to the plan; however, all written concerns will be submitted with their response letter to the PA DEP.

Mr. McFarland asked if a plan is currently in place should the spring go dry; Steve Weaver, Chairperson of Roaring Spring Municipal Authority stated there is no other water source and they pump about 300,000 gallons per day to customers. Mr. Carbaugh added that the permitting process to drill a new well can take a year to year and half.

Mr. Green added an additional comment about the other interests in the water, in the past month the Borough has had participation from a company specializing in micro hydroelectric power systems that wants to provide a demonstration of their system in a stream of the spring within the Borough to generate electricity, which could mean a benefit back to the tax paying citizens and could provide an educational benefit for the schools. This has multi-faceted impacts for the community.

Mr. McFarland summarized the motion at hand as follows: we have a motion for a letter that states the proposed plan is generally consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan with the following caveats of concerns: 1) hydrologic study; 2) the de-watering of adjacent springs that has happened already; 3) coordination between the Bureau of Mines and Bureau of Water; 4) impact on jobs if the permit does not go through; 5) impact on the water source of the public users; 6) a statement

addressing the open comments by way of attached letters; 7) the additional need for water for future investment and development.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #10 (moved to Item #5) on this agenda:
Moved: Lawrence Carter
Seconded: James Dixon
Objection: Thomas Holsinger
Voted: 4 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

5. Mona L. Ferris and PTV 1286, LLC Lot Merge and New Dollar General Store -located along Sixth Avenue between 56th and 58th Streets in the City of Altoona and is a re-submittal from December 2022. Ms. Caron explained the proposed development is a lot merge of four (4) adjoining parcels with construction of a 9, 100 square-foot Dollar General store, new landscaping, sidewalks, paved parking and removal of existing landscaping and sidewalks. A residential neighborhood is located adjacent to the alley. A bicycle rack and 22 vehicle spots that include two (2) ADA accessible spots are proposed, which meets the City's requirements. The plan includes a 12-foot wide ingress and 11-foot right-turn only egress onto 6th avenue; a corrugated, concrete traffic separator will assist with delivery truck access. A 24-foot wide, bi-directional easement located at the alley will provide additional access to the site to allow adequate mobility. It is recommended the developer paint crosswalk hash lines for increased visibility at the site entrance along the main thoroughfare. There are no environmental concerns and the stormwater management plan proposes soil amendments and an underground drain pipe detention. The landscaped islands in the parking lot will help improve water retention in the soil.

In response to a question, Ms. Caron confirmed the only means of exit is a right-turn only and signage will be posted to indicate the right-turn only.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #5 on this agenda:
Moved: Thomas Holsinger
Seconded: Patrick Baechle
Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

6. Roselawn Parking and Storage Development Plan -located along Roselawn Avenue in the City of Altoona. The plan proposes a paved, parking expansion to the 58th Street Shopping Plaza with 70 parking spaces, including 3 ADA spaces, along with two (2) 2,100-square foot storage buildings, each building will consist of 14 10x 15 rental units. Also proposed are associated gravel drives, additional sidewalks and landscape improvements. Access to this parking lot expansion will be via two, 22-foot wide, bi-directional drives off Rosemont Avenue. The 24-foot wide, drive aisles will provide ample traffic circulation at the site. As the parking is adjacent to the shopping center, it is recommended that a painted crosswalk be included at the drive aisle crossing Roselawn Avenue. Access to the storage site by a 20-foot wide, bidirectional gravel drive from Boyce Avenue. The proposed parking is four (4) parking spaces that includes one (1) ADA space. Proposed landscaping includes street and buffer trees along Boyce Avenue. The developer requests a waiver for a smaller set back of the buffer area of the parking lot and adjacent church for the church to utilize parking as well. There are no environmental issues; the proposed stormwater management improvements include installation of shallow infiltration berms to help mitigate some of the negative impacts due to the increased impervious surface. It is recommended that the developer ensure stormwater improvements are compliant with the City.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #6 on this agenda:
Moved: Thomas Holsinger
Seconded: Patrick Baechle
Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

7. Cresco Sunnyside Land Development -located along Plank Road in Logan Township. This proposal is for the development of a licensed medical marijuana dispensary in the former K-Mart Auto Service facility. The proposal includes architectural updates to the existing building along with the addition of sidewalks and improvements to the existing parking facilities. Access to site is from an existing, signalized intersection and shared easement from East Plank Road. Signage for the exiting access easement and stripping of the parking lot are proposed for improved maneuverability. The Planning Commission does not necessarily oppose the existing 22-foot-wide drive aisles, which do not meet Logan Township's minimum requirements of 25-feet; the

structure already exists and already utilized that way; one-way parking around the building is proposed. Sidewalks are not proposed along Plank Road but it is recommended that sidewalks be included for pedestrian circulation and safety. Landscaping is not proposed but it is recommended that street trees be included along Plank Road to prevent headlight glare. No additional site lighting is proposed beyond the existing lighting. Portions of the site are in the floodplain but the existing building is situated outside of the floodplain so there is not significant concern. No change planned for impervious cover, therefore no significant impact is anticipated on the watershed.

Chairman Hall commented that the Planning Commission does not typically review a re-development plan for a re-use of an existing building. Mr. McFarland responded that local ordinances trigger when a review is needed for this type of development. Mr. Baechle directed a retraction in the review letter regarding the 22-foot-wide drive aisles, which does actually meet the requirement. Ms. Caron clarified that this facility is a dispensary only, it does not include a greenhouse. It was noted that this is the fourth medical marijuana facility in Logan Township.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #7 on this agenda:

Moved: James Dixon

Seconded: Lawrence Carter

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

8. Staff Level Reviews - Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following requests since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these requests prior to response letters being sent:

- Antis Township: Scott McElheny and Nadine Shade Subdivision Plan
- Antis Township: Todd Himes Minor Land Development
- Catharine Township: Jamie S. Smith Minor Lot Re-Subdivision
- Frankstown Township: Kent & Elizabeth Shade Minor Subdivision
- Logan Township: Winrick Subdivision and Lot Consolidation
- Tyrone Township: Allen and Marcella Blackie Lot Merge
- Woodbury Township: England Family Partnership
- Duncansville Borough: Jeff Long Minor Subdivision
- Hollidaysburg Borough: Kramer and Freedom Storage Rentals Lot Line Relocation

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #8 on this agenda:

Moved: Lawrence Carter

Seconded: Thomas Holisinger

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

ACTIONS BY GOVERNING BODIES

9. Hollidaysburg Borough – A request to review the proposed amendment of Section 509 of the Hollidaysburg Borough Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22, titled, 'Design Standards for Stormwater Management', which deletes Section 509 entirely and is replaced with the new, proposed amendment, titled 'Borough of Hollidaysburg Stormwater Management Ordinance. The amended ordinance is a more comprehensive approach to stormwater management. Ms. Caron stated that the Beaver Dam Branch Watershed Act serves as a model ordinance with specific language for the following key sections, which should be adopted verbatim to accomplish the goals of Act 167, 'Watershed Stormwater Management Plan: General Provisions, Stormwater Management Performance Standards and, Stormwater Plan Requirements for Exemptions. The proposed amendment is consistent with countywide planning efforts, provided the revision includes the specified language.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #9 on this agenda:

Moved: James Dixon

Seconded: Patrick Baechle

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

METROPOLITAN CLEARINGHOUSE

(Item #10 was moved up earlier in the agenda)

11. Staff Level Reviews – Planning staff has reviewed and responded to the following requests since the last meeting. Commission members were given an opportunity via email to review these requests prior to response letters being sent:

- Greenfield Township: First Energy Service Company – Buckeye RCT-1 Guy Wire Utility Crossing Project, PA EPA, General Permit 5 Application
- Greenfield Township: Peoples Natural Gas Co, LLC – Bedford Street and Mainline Alley Intersection
- Linear Pipeline Relocation Utility Line Crossing Project, PA EPA, General Permit 5 Application
- Juniata Township: Duke Energy – North Allegheny Wind Repower Project, PA EPA, Chapter 102 Permit
- Taylor Township: Walters Auto Wrecking – PA DEP NPDES Permit Renewal Application
- Hollidaysburg Borough: EADS Group – Clark Street Sanitary Sewer Phase 3 Improvement Project, PA DEP Water Quality Management Phase II Permit Application
- Tyrone Borough: Vitro Automotive Glass – PA DEP, State-Only Operating Permit Renewal Application

Correction – Walters Auto Wrecking is not in Taylor Township, rather it is split between Blair and Freedom Townships.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations listed above, with the correction mentioned, for Item #11 on this agenda:

Moved: Thomas Holsinger

Seconded: Lawrence Carter

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

Letters of Support –

- City of Altoona: 25th Street and 7th Avenue Signal Improvements and Intersection Upgrades Project, PennDOT 2023 Green Light-Go Grant Application, \$695,987.30
- Blair Township: Applewood Sewer Replacement Project, PA DCED Commonwealth Financing Authority for Small Water and Sewer Grant Application
- Roaring Spring: Source Water Pumping, PA H2O Grant, Commonwealth Financing Authority
- Roaring Spring: Asbestos Waterline Replacement, PA Small Water and Sewer Grant, Commonwealth Financing Authority

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for letters of support in Item #11 on this agenda:

Moved: Patrick Baechle

Seconded: Lawrence Carter

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

GRANTS:

12. Frankstown Township Memorial Park Improvements Project (Geeseytown) Strategic Planner Sherry Socie reported that this DCNR grant, in the amount of \$240,000 was previously presented to the Board. This grant has been awarded and she held a conference call with the program manager and the township secretary to allow the Township to begin receiving funds. A letter of support from the Blair County Planning Commission is needed that had been inadvertently absent from the grant application.

In addition to the DCNR grant, Mrs. Socie explained that the Frankstown Township engineer also had written and submitted a DCED grant application requesting nearly \$500,000 in Local Share funds that does not require a match. It is anticipated that the DCED will announce the local share awards at its March 15, 2023 meeting. If Frankstown is awarded the DCED grant, it is Mrs. Socie's understanding that Frankstown Township will likely return the DCNR grant award, which is a reimbursement grant that they have not yet received any funds.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Item #12 on this agenda:

Moved: Thomas Holsinger

Seconded: Patrick Baechle

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

Mrs. Socie provided an update on Tyrone Township's culverts project, stating the Township had decided to wait for other funding avenues, not to piece-meal funding the project. The Tyrone Township engineer previously suggested/submitted a PA H2O grant application, which may cover the culvert project versus the local share grant.

Mrs. Socie also updated the Board that applications for the 2023 local shares grant has not been announced and will probably be delayed until Fall because all of the 2022 awards are still pending, they have not been issued.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1:10:09

13. Active Mobility Committee –At the Planning Commission's January meeting the idea was brought up to establish two committees. One committee to look at the various types of activities in Blair County. This Committee will be titled The Active Mobility Committee. Mr. McFarland recommends a nine (9)-member committee, with one or two Planning Board members and the others from the community. The committee shall bring under one umbrella the various activity plans, some are required, like the greenways, pedestrian/bicycle trails; and there should be a buggy plan. The Committee can determine if any gaps exist in the plans or in the actual infrastructure, like sidewalk gaps or incomplete street issues. The new IJA bi-partisan infrastructure bill provides several thousand dollars of funding to be used only for these specific issues.
14. Floodplain Administration – Chairman Hall noted it has been for some time that the Planning Commission has questioned whether to remain in an advisory status or to become regulatory. And so, the Planning Commission's involvement/capacity of floodplain administration remains undetermined. Mr. McFarland recommends a committee membership of either three (3) or five (5) with at least one Planning Commission member and a couple municipal representatives and maybe with an engineering background person with a specialty type in floodplain administration.

Motion: To approve the staff actions and recommendations for Items #13 and 14 on this agenda:

Moved: Lawrence Carter

Seconded: James Dixon

Voted: 5 in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

15. Planning Director's Report – The Planning Director will give a brief update on professional development and administrative issues for the organization, including (but not limited to):
 - Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – The Hazard Mitigation Committee met on February 21. Mr. Ernest Szabo from PEMA attended that meeting and provided a review of the Hazard Mitigation process and what needs done to address the elements of the plan, why the plan is important and what happens if it is not done. It was noted that almost every municipality had representation at the meeting. Mr. McFarland pointed out that one of the new requirements is that all municipalities must attend the meetings on a regular basis in order to adopt the plan and in turn, to receive the benefits of that plan. He commented that during the Hazard Mitigation meeting changes to how the Committee operates will need addressed. The update will be a re-write of the 2018 plan, which is still robust and good but will have additions. Previously, the Action items in the Plan had to be fulfilled in the five years or we needed an excuse why they were not completed. The Action Plan is now the Aspiration plan. The next meeting scheduled for Hazard Mitigation is in June and will formally kickoff the endowment of the re-write. The Committee needs to be expanded to include a cross section of the community in the membership, such as medical, industry, seniors, maybe children/schools, colleges, retail, etc. Mr. Baechle mentioned the train accident in Ohio. Mr. McFarland responded that in fact train accidents were mentioned during the 2013 Plan.
 - Municipal Outreach- the outreach meetings are nearly two-thirds complete. In the future these outreach meetings will be scheduled later in the year, as the meetings compete with many things during this time of year. These meetings are typically held two (2) per day. The outreach meetings continue to be successful and there is strong feedback for interest in a county-wide floodplain administrator. He noted there is high interest in Hazard Mitigation with the realization of additional funding sources; he noted Mrs. Socie may be quite busy with an extensive list for next year.
 - Local Share Reorganization – Mr. McFarland explained the proposed idea to change the local share structure to divide off a percentage of the local share, make that an equal charge, He noted that this idea has been presented

during the municipal outreach meetings and so far has not met with any overt push back. He provided the following as an example:

EXAMPLE: *If the Planning Commission needs \$100,000 to operate, have each municipality pay \$1,000 (25%) for a designated number of Planning Staff service hours to assist with various projects, etc., items that are not grant eligible expenses. The per capita fee covers the remaining 75 percent of the operational expenses. Chairman Hall stated that this is not set in stone yet but that they want to figure a way to equalize things for the municipalities.*

Chairman Hall added comment that there may be a change in how appointments are made to the Planning Commission membership. The current nine (9) members are appointed as follows: 3 for the City, 3 for the Boroughs and 3 for the Townships. Some municipalities feel that they appointed a member to the Board and is their sole representative.

- Alleghenies Ahead Update – Mr. McFarland stated this year marks the halfway point for this plan and the Commission will need to open it up, look at what has been accomplished and what we are doing and if any changes/tweaks need to be made in terms of the Action Items only, that the five (5) big topics will not be open for change in this update. He stated that based on earlier comments of today's meeting, there will be an added item for public health – water.

16. Planning Commissioners' Forum – No comment.

17. Questions from the Media – Mr. Frank asked for clarification on Item #10 that the application was reviewed and found to be consistent with the County-wide Plan. Mr. McFarland confirmed it is consistent, taking into account all the caveats. Mr. Frank also asked if the letter is to be sent to the PA DEP, which Mr. McFarland also confirmed, yes. Mr. Frank asked what MLS stands for; Mr. McFarland responded, 'mean sea level', related to elevation. Mr. Hall commented that there seems to be questions as to whether all the 't's' were crossed and 'l's' dotted. That once you lose the water supply, you never get it back.

18. Upcoming Events –

- March 3-5 – Home Show, Blair County Convention Center
- March 7 – Altoona Comprehensive Plan Bid Opening, City Hall
- March 14 – PennDOT Pedalcycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Online
- March 20 – GAC meeting, 6:30 to 8:00 PM, Logan Township Municipal Building
- March 29 – WPC, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Hollidaysburg Advisory Committee, 1PM, Hollidaysburg Library

ADJOURNMENT

The next Planning Commission Board meeting is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 30, 2023 at the Altoona Water Authority, 900 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 10:33 a.m.
Moved: Thomas Holsinger
Seconded: James Dixon
Voted: in favor, no abstentions, so ordered by Chairperson

Respectfully Submitted,



Minutes Approved: March 30, 2023