



COUNTY OF ERIE

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Brenton Davis
County Executive

Jessica Horan
Director

**Erie County Planning Commission
April 13, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.
Fairview Township Building
Minutes**

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Chairman Matthew Waldinger called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The following were in attendance: **Quorum = 5**

District/Designation	Municipality	Name	Present
District 1	Millcreek Twp	Matt Waldinger	Present
District 2	City of Erie	Lisa Austin	Present
District 3	City of Erie	Don Crenshaw	Absent
District 4	City of Erie	Charles Casey	Present
District 5	Summit Twp	Mark Sleppy	Present
District 6	UC Borough	Cindy Wells	Absent
District 7	Fairview Twp	Jim Cardman	Present
At-Large	Elk Creek Twp	Michael Orr	Present
At-Large	Girard Borough	Jeanne Miller	Present
Alternate 1			
Alternate 2 (vacant)			
Alternate 3 (vacant)			

ALSO in attendance: Jessica Horan, EC Planning Depart.; John McGranor, EC Planning Dept.; Nancy Blimmel, EC Planning Dept.

3. **Review and Approval of Minutes from last meeting:** The minutes from the February 9, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously on a motion made by Charles Casey and seconded by Michael Orr.
4. **Hearing of the Public:** None
5. **Old Business:**
 - a. Jessica Horan gave an update on adoption of LRTP into Erie County Comprehensive Plan. A public hearing was held on March 28, 2023 with Erie County Council to present the plan for inclusion in the Erie County Comprehensive Plan. This has not been done in the past and is a requirement of the MPC. The plan was on display for 45 days with council and the administration prior to the public hearing. Council voted unanimously to include the LRTP into the Erie County Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. John McGranor, Planner, updated the commission on the Erie County Solar amendment to the County’s SALDO. The ordinance will regulate large solar developments in communities that do not have their own SALDO. During the discussion, a change was made, specifically to what size lot should be exempt from the ordinance. The original proposal suggested 2 acres or less, however, after a vote of 5 to 2 in favor, it was

changed to 1 acre or less. A second change was made to the language on "Solar Project Area" to say "exclusively for agricultural uses".

Pending the changes, a motion was made to approve the ordinance by Mark Sleppy and seconded by Charles Casey. The motion passed with six members voting in favor and one member voting not in favor and will be presented to County Council for adoption into the SALDO.

A discussion followed regarding bringing all solar development plans before the planning commission for a public hearing.

A motion was made by Lisa Austin and seconded by Matthew Waldinger. Two members voted in favor of this and 5 voted against this. The motion did not pass.

- c. John McGranor presented the 400 plus page Erie County Hazard Mitigation Plan to the commission. The current plan is posted on the County website and is updated every 5 years with Public Safety's participation. The purpose of the plan is to protect the public from natural and human causes, identify issues and fix them. The plan is required by law and is needed in order to be eligible for grants from FEMA. All municipalities need to adopt this by April, 2024. The 3 focus areas were
 - i. Risk Assessment
 - ii. Capability Assessment of municipalities
 - iii. Mitigation Plan for each municipality

There were 210 projects identified with the top categories being local plans and regulations, structural/infrastructure, natural systems protections and education/awareness.

A motion was made to recommend adoption of the Hazard Mitigation Plan by the County by Charles Casey with a second from Lisa Austin. The motion passed unanimously and will be presented to County Council.

6. New Business:

The Planning Department added to their website. There is now a category for all "plans", i.e. the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

7. Communications

A. Department of Planning and Community Development Report

Mike Orr was officially appointed as a member of the Commission. His term runs through the end of 2026.

Jeanne Miller was re-appointed to the Commission with her term also expiring at the end of 2026.

The Planning Department still has a number of vacancies. They have been interviewing for a Parks & Recreation coordinator, CDBG administrator, CDBG/Whole-Home Repair coordinator. There is also a vacancy for a GIS analyst.

The results of the Broadband Feasibility Study showed that there are 232 miles of unserved internet in Erie County. It will take \$15 million to close that gap.

Jessica attended the National APA Conference in Philadelphia. There were some good parts of the conference but it was very disorganized.

- B. Commissioner Reports – It would be helpful to hear brief comments as to what is happening planning-wise in your area (see table above)**

- **District 1:** Matt Waldinger reported that the Gateway project is still underway – 3 properties are under ownership with 2 more to go.
 - **District 2:** Lisa presented an article on the Bayfront Roadway with an artist depiction of the impact of the changes that are going to be made by PennDOT.
 - **District 3:** absent
 - **District 4:** Charles Casey reported that there are many projects underway: parks, streets, Oliver’s new mini golf on Bayfront to name a few.
 - **District 5:** nothing to report
 - **District 6:** absent
 - **District 7:** Fairview just applied for a \$6.6 million grant through Representative Kelly’s office as well as other ARC grants. Just completed the Rte 98 Corridor Study by WRA. They did a great job on the study. The Landbank has completed many demolitions and are always looking for new projects. They would encourage the municipalities to participate.
 - Michael Orr from **Elk Creek Township** reported that they are working on a holding tank ordinance update as well as the solar and wind ordinance.
 - Jeanne Miller from **Girard Borough** reported they have funds from the gaming revenue for Main Street and Renaissance. They have 15 applications from residents for windows, sidewalks, gutters. Residents must fill out an application on a first come, first served basis.
- 8.** Adjournment: Chairman Waldinger informed the commission that the next meeting will be held on June 8, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the Girard Borough Building.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Charles Casey and seconded by Lisa Austin. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.