



# COUNTY OF ERIE

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
Erie County Planning Commission

## Erie County Planning Commission

### Minutes

April 11, 2024

### Erie County Planning Department

1. **Matthew Waldinger** began the meeting at 6:01 following the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Roll Call**

**Quorum = 5**

District/Designation	Municipality	Name	Present
District 2	City of Erie	Lisa Austin	Absent
District 3	City of Erie	William McLaughlin	Present
District 4	City of Erie	Vacant	
District 5		Vacant	
District 6	UC Borough	Cindy Wells	Present
District 7	McKean Twp	Ronald Bole	Present
At-Large	Girard Borough	Jeanne Miller	Present
At-Large	Elk Creek Twp	Michael Orr	Present
Alternate 1			
Alternate 2 (vacant)			
Alternate 3 (vacant)			

**ALSO in attendance:** Jessica Horan, Director of Erie County Planning Department; Nancy Blimmel, ECPD

3. **Review and Approval of Minutes from last meeting:** A motion to approve the minutes from the December 14, 2023 meeting was made by William McLaughlin with a second from Michael Orr. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Hearing of the Public:** None

5. **Old Business:**

A. Overview of the role of the Planning Commissioner: Jessica Horan welcomed the new Planning Commissioners, Ronald Bole and William McLaughlin. She briefly discussed the role and responsibilities of the Commission versus the role/responsibilities of the Planning Department as they pertain to Zoning and Land Development. Of the 38 municipalities within Erie County, 26 have their own Municipal Zoning Ordinances and SALDO, 7 have Municipal Zoning Ordinances only and 3 have neither.

B. Jessica Horan informed the Commission that the PA Chapter APA will be holding their annual conference in Erie this year. It will be October 13-15, 2024 and will be held at the Convention Center. With the Planning Department’s contribution to the event, we expect to get a number of passes. If any of the Commissioners would like to attend, please let Jessica or Nancy know. Registration will start sometime in the summer.

6. **New Business:**

- New Appointments for 2024: William McLaughlin and Ron Bole have been appointed to the Planning Commission. William will represent District 3 of

the City of Erie and Ron will represent District 7, specifically McKean Township. The Commission still needs 2 more commissioners, for District 4 and District 5. Jessica Horan will continue to work with County Council to get these spots filled.

- The 2024 election of officers took place. A motion to elect Matt Waldinger as Chairperson and Jeanne Miller as Vice Chairperson was made by Michael Orr and seconded by Ron Bole. The motion passed unanimously.
- Planning Commission training: The COG has organized a Planning Commission Member Training through the PA DCED. It will be held on May 16, 2024 at the Summit Township Building starting at 5:30pm until 8:00 pm. You can register online or let Nancy Blimmel at the Planning Department know. Ron Bole and William McLaughlin stated they would attend. Mike Orr gave a tentative yes to attend. He will confirm later.
- Jeanne Miller inquired about funding for parks. Jessica indicated that they are preparing a new grant application for the municipalities, similar to GAP funding. It will be sent out to the municipalities when it is ready.

## **7. Communications**

### **A. Jessica Horan gave an update on activities with the Department of Planning and Community Development Report:**

- We will be receiving a grant for \$107,000 for HANDS (CHDO).
- ARPA funds are running low.
- There are transportation funds available for studies in communities. Jeanne Miller inquired about the Lake City issues. Jessica will have our transportation planner send over the application.
- Bids were submitted for a study firm for transportation. WRA (Whitman, Requardt & Associates) was awarded the contract. We have worked with this company for many years and they do a great job.
- We have 2 programs within Planning to help with bridge issues – the \$5 Local Use Fee program and the Act 13 Bridge program.
- The Whole-Home Repair program is underway. We are currently working on 3 applications through the Corry Redevelopment Authority and 8 applications through the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie. The Community College has hired an instructor to create a construction trades training program. They anticipate classes for this to start in July.
- The Planning Department currently has 2 vacancies: Grant Administrator and Planning Program Administrator (John McGranor's old job.)

## **8. Commissioner Reports:**

District 1: Matt Waldinger provided an update on the West 8<sup>th</sup> Street demolitions. The demos are almost complete. Grass will be planted until the property is developed. Matt also shared that Millcreek recently did a minor update to their zoning code. It had most recently been updated in 2022.

District 2: None

District 3: William McLaughlin reported that there have been many projects being done in the district - the repair of the wall on the pier, near the Coast Guard Station, construction along the Bayfront has begun, the remodeling at Erie High is expected to be completed by Fall, the Boston Store is having remodeling done, Erie Insurance is still working on their building along Sixth Street.

District 4: None

District 5: None

District 6: None

District 7: Ron Bole reported that Amazon would not be building a facility in McKean (at the former Green Shingle.) Amazon had originally come to them indicating they were interested in doing this. McKean provided everything they asked; however, Amazon chose another site, no reason given.

Ron Bole inquired about the difference between the planning commission appointments, i.e. the district appointment versus the at-large appointment. Jessica responded that the district appointments are *recommended* by County Council and the at-large are *appointed* by the County Executive and he can pick from anywhere in Erie County.

Girard Borough: Jeanne Miller Girard reported that Girard received another grant for \$125,000 for downtown as well as one for \$6,200 from PA Arts Council for park (old Girard Hotel spot.) Waiting for PennDOT to remove corner before planting trees.

Elk Creek Township: Michael Orr reported that the refuse company has pulled out due to the cost and pushback from DEP.

**9.** Adjournment: Matt Waldinger reported that the next Planning Commission meeting will be in Girard on June 13, 2024 at 6:00 pm. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michael Orr and seconded by Jeanne Miller. The meeting adjourned at 6:59.