

Lawrence County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
New Castle Union Station Craft Distillery
June 12, 2024
12:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Lawrence County Planning Commission was held at the New Castle, Union Station Craft Distillery at 12:00 PM on June 12, 2024.

Attendance

Planning Commission

Board:

Larry Lambo, Chairman
Karolee Loughhead, Vice Chairperson
Everett Bleakney
James Blundo
Ben Bush (Alternate)
Dave Hammond
Cindy Morabito
Hygeia Moss-Eggleston (Alternate)
Linda Nitch
Frank Telesz

Staff:

Amy McKinney, Director of Planning
Allen Miller, Deputy Director of Planning
Rebecca Shaffer, Deputy Director of Community Development
Alexander Riccardi, GIS Planner

Guests:

Daniel Vogler, County Commissioner
Chris Sainato, County Commissioner
Matthew Glover, New Castle News
Brian Burick, CDC City of New Castle
Ricky Trinidad, Metrovitalization
Gary Johnson, Metrovitalization
Al Burick, Shenango Township
Rod Firmi, New Castle Union Station Distillery
David Goldberg, New Castle Union Station Distillery

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Lawrence County Planning Commission was called to order at 12:09 PM by Larry Lambo.

Additions/Deletion to Agenda

There were no additions or deletions made to the agenda.

Public Comments

Brian Burick from the CDC of New Castle stated that they had received three small grants from the National Association of Realtors. One of them in the amount of \$7500 has been earmarked for picnic tables and trees to be placed at the former First Merit building site. They also have some funds available to help create the greenspace at that location.

David Goldberg and Rob Firmi, owners of the New Castle Union Station Distillery gave a brief overview of the history of the train station as well as the recent renovations.

Ricky Trinidad of Metrovitalization made comments regarding Royalty Place land development and stated that they are working with their engineers to address the comments Deputy Director, Allen Miller, listed in his review of the land development plan.

Al Burick, Shenango Township Manager, answered questions regarding the Taco Bell teardown/rebuild land development.

Regular Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes: Karolee Loughhead moved, seconded by Frank Telesz to approve the minutes from the March 13th, 2024, meeting. Motion carried, 8-0.

2. Staff Report:

- Amy reviewed the Side Yard Program administered through the Redevelopment Authority of Lawrence County.
- **Comprehensive Plan/Greenways Plans:** DCNR C2P2 Quaker Falls – Horizon Construction Group, Inc. will begin construction next week. The project consists of a picnic pavilion, two (2) observation decks, two (2) sets of stairs and railing providing access to the lower falls with a viewing platform. West Park Nature Center culvert project has been completed by Heckman Diversified Construction Services, Inc. as of June 6, 2024. Our office will be performing inspections of all county parks and boat launches. We will be overseeing the upgrade and enhancements of all five (5) boat launches thanks to WPC (Western Pennsylvania Conservancy) this spring/summer season.
- **CDBG:** General administrative duties. FY2023 application was submitted at the end of October and still working with DCED to certify that application. FY2022 Ellwood City – ADA Curb Ramp Project was advertised June 3 and June 10, with bids being due July 15, 2024. A mandatory pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 1, 2024. This project will provide access to twelve (12) non-conforming curb ramps in the borough.
- **ARPA:** General Administrative Duties. Reviewing applications for eligibility and reporting back to the Commissioners. As of May 7th, the Restricted funds have all been allocated. The quarterly report will be due at end of July.
- **SPC:** Attended TTC meetings. Planning Directors Meeting. TIP Work group meetings and the Public Participation meeting were held to review the draft TIP. Draft TIP will be voted on at the June 24th Commission meeting. Attended the SPC Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Action Committee meeting. Regional initiative to submit a BEAD application for Broadband expansion
- **NORTHWEST:** Attended the NW Planners Meeting. Discussion with the NW for a regional initiative to submit a BEAD application for Broadband expansion. Commissioners entered into an MOU with the Northwest on June 4th to start the process.
- **RALC:** Administering the Side Yard Program and Countywide Housing and Blight Remediation Program. Working on a Countywide Façade Improvement

program and Ellwood City Façade Program. Working with City of New Castle and RAR Engineering on First Merit demolition.

- **Link-Up Lawrence:** Meeting with Micheal Baker to discuss implementation of Link-Up Lawrence Plan and working with the NW and SW Commissions.
- **General:** Attended the Board of Realtors meeting, State of the County with Forward Lawrence

3. Commissioner's Comments:

Due to a full schedule, Commissioners Vogler and Sainato declined to make comments.

- 4. Forward Lawrence:** Ben Bush stated that they have purchased the former Elliott Steel building, and will be using some funding to get the building back into operational status. There are two potential tenants right now for the space. Both are in the steel industry and would employ about 30 people with the starting wage being around \$20 an hour. Everything is moving along at Millenium Park with the Steelite property. They are doing a site assessment soon to identify the best properties throughout the county for industrial development as well as infrastructure expansion that would need to take place there. A subcommittee which, Amy McKinney and Commissioner Kennedy will sit on will review bids that will be coming in soon. So far, they have administered \$608,000.00 of the funds received from the SSBCI, State Small Business Credit Initiative, which funds low interest loans that must be matched by a banking institution. They will be receiving more funding in August. Also, they have a \$500,000.00 EPA brownfield assessment grant.

5. Old Business: None

6. New Business: None

Action Agenda:

Subdivision and Land Developments: Three land developments were presented to the Board for review:

ROYALTY PLACE – Union Township: Allen Miller reviewed the County Comments on the plan. Everett Bleakney moved that the Township take the County comments presented into consideration before approval. Dave Hammond seconded.
Motion carried 8-0.

TACO BELL – Shenango Township: Allen Miller reviewed the County Comments on the plan. Karolee Loughhead moved that the Township take the County comments presented into consideration before approval. Linda Nitch seconded.
Motion carried 8-0.

JOSEPH FAMILY DENTAL – Neshannock Township: Alexander Ricardi reviewed the County Comments on the plan. Frank Telesz moved that the Township take the County comments presented into consideration before approval. Cindy Morabito seconded.
Motion carried 8-0.

Zoning and Municipal Reviews:

- **New Wilmington Borough** – Zoning Amendment – Commercial District residence as a special exception.
- **Ellwood City Borough** - Zoning Amendment – C-3: CC-Core Commercial Overlay front yard depth.
- **Bessemer Borough** – Zoning Amendment – Residential to Commercial
- **Shenango Township** – Zoning Amendment – I-1 Light Industrial to C-1 General Commercial

Act 14 Notifications:

19 Reviews since the March 13, 2024, meeting.

Adjournment:

Linda Nitch moved that the meeting adjourn, seconded by Dave Hammond. Meeting adjourned at 1:09 PM

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 10th, 2024, at 12:00 PM at the Slippery Rock Township Municipal Building, located at 4334 US 422, New Castle, PA.