

# CRAWFORD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

## January Regular Meeting Minutes Crawford County Courthouse, Meadville, Pennsylvania

Commissioner Dreese, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the Crawford County Planning Commission (Planning Commission) to order at 3:40 p.m. on January 24, 2022.

### 1. Planning Commission Roll Call:

#### **Present –**

John Lawrence, Treasurer  
Katie Wickert, Vice-Chair  
John Frye  
Ron Mattocks, Secretary  
Austin Rock  
Jessica Hillburn  
Travis Palmer  
Maria Dreese, Chair

#### **Absent –**

Scott Sjolander

#### **Other Attendees –**

Zach Norwood, CC Planning Director  
Thomas Gilbertson, CC Assistant Planning Director for Community Planning  
Peter Grella, CC Land Use Planner  
Christopher Seeley, Crawford County Auditor

### 2. Action on December 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes:

Commissioner Dreese requested action on the December 2021 Regular Meeting minutes. Commissioner Wickert moved to adopt the minutes; Commissioner Frye seconded; motion carried unanimously.

### 3. Communications:

Mr. Norwood provided an update on the communications received by the Planning Commission since their December 2021 regular meeting. Communications included:

- National Association of Counties Newsletter.

### 4. Reports:

A. Standing Committees –

Transportation Committee: Commissioner Lawrence noted that the committee did not meet but will be working soon to meet with Mr. Gabo and another individual to learn more about the electric vehicle business.

Agricultural and Environmental Concerns Committee: Commissioner Wickert reported that the committee's December work session had to be postponed. Tentatively, the work session was rescheduled for Tuesday, January 25, 2022. The plan for the work session is to flush out strategies for the County Forest Strategic Plan.

Personnel: Commissioner Dreese noted that the committee has not met but will be working to schedule an orientation for the Planning Commission's new members. The committee plans to meet toward the end of January or beginning of February in order to work on a few items from the County Planning Agency Strategic Plan.

Planning Initiatives Committee: Commissioner Mattocks reported that the committee met on January 19, 2022 to discuss a proposal for affordable housing and internal deadlines for approval as a committee. Secondly, the committee discussed its priorities for 2022 including topics such as short-term rental ordinance assistance, historic preservation, blighted property inventories, and the issue of flooding in certain communities. The committee will be meeting again in the coming months (February and March 2022).

## B. Planning Director's Report –

### [Administrative Updates]

None.

### Community Planning Projects

#### CONNEAUT VALLEY BOROUGH'S MULTI-MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

##### - Reports Completed to Date:

Community Change Profile (Appendix A) – Finalized in early 2021, a community change profile based off U.S. Census Bureau demographic profile datasets has been completed. The version presented for local adoption may undergo minor edits. Key findings from the community change profile have been presented on the projects ArcGIS Hub site and can be viewed at –

[https://www.crawfordcountypa.net/Planning/\\_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Planning/Documents/Conneaut%20Valley%20Plan/A\\_Community\\_Change\\_Profile.pdf&action=default](https://www.crawfordcountypa.net/Planning/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Planning/Documents/Conneaut%20Valley%20Plan/A_Community_Change_Profile.pdf&action=default)

Existing Plans Review (Appendix B) – Finalized in the Spring of 2021, this appendix provides a review of all previously planned projects and recommendations plotted out in and near Springboro, Conneautville, and Linesville. An ArcGIS Story Map has been created to give interested citizens an opportunity to explore past planning efforts in their community. To explore the resource, visit –

[https://www.crawfordcountypa.net/Planning/\\_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Planning/Documents/Conneaut%20Valley%20Plan/B\\_Existing\\_Plans\\_Review.pdf&action=default](https://www.crawfordcountypa.net/Planning/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Planning/Documents/Conneaut%20Valley%20Plan/B_Existing_Plans_Review.pdf&action=default)

Community Survey Report (Appendix C) – A full report and executive summary synthesizing the results and findings of the community survey administered in Springboro, Conneautville, and

Linesville has been completed. In addition to the report, results and findings from the community survey will be shared through a variety of mediums including presentations, informational posters, and website infographics. To read either the executive summary or full report, visit –  
[https://www.crawfordcountypa.net/Planning/\\_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Planning/Documents/ConneautValley-CompPlan/Website/Appendix\\_C\\_Community\\_Survey\\_Report.pdf&action=default](https://www.crawfordcountypa.net/Planning/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/Planning/Documents/ConneautValley-CompPlan/Website/Appendix_C_Community_Survey_Report.pdf&action=default)

- Reports Pending Final Edits & Additions:

Existing Conditions Analysis (Appendix D) – The final component of this report will include a general profile, service area approximation, and a detailed listing of both immediate and long-range capital needs for each public water and sanitary sewer system across the three boroughs. Questionnaires are currently being sent out to Steering Committee members and local utility managers to gather details. Community Planning will follow up with local utility managers to document questionnaire results. A draft version of the existing conditions study has been distributed to Steering Committee members for feedback.

- Project Website:

An ArcGIS Hub website is being regularly maintained to support community awareness and outreach for the planning process. The site can be accessed here – <https://conneaut-valley-plan-crawfordcountypa.hub.arcgis.com/>. The website will undergo significant enhancements prior ramping up public outreach in the coming weeks.

- Upcoming Focus Groups:

A series of three focus groups will be hosted by the Planning Office and Steering Committee to support education and outreach for the planning process. Each focus group will target a different stakeholder group. Scheduled dates for these focus groups are:

- Conneaut School Board of Directors – Venue/address TBD, Tuesday, 2.22.2022 from (evening – time TBD).
- Conneaut Valley Businesses – Venue/address TBD, Monday, 2.28.2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Conneaut Valley Civic Organizations – Conneautville Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall - 1015 Strawberry Alley, Conneautville on Wednesday, 2.23.2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Request for Support: The Community Planning Division would like to request that one Planning Commission member other than Commissioner Wickert who sits on the Steering Committee attend these focus group events.

- Upcoming Public Engagement:

A schedule of community planning charrettes has been set by the Steering Committee for Springboro, Conneautville, and Linesville. Three charrettes (one for each borough) will concern community visioning and another set of three will concern project and strategy development. A final charrette will comprise a single event in Conneautville to validate and review the project and strategy proposals.

## COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Envision Crawford:

Use of brackets [ ] represents information not directly stated into the record at the meeting but summarized from another document. Use of italics represents information stated into the record but herein clarified in greater detail.

The Community Planning Division has prepared a strategy for producing a community vision as a part of updating the 2014 Crawford County Comprehensive Plan. A workplace of activities comprising the “preparation stage” of this project have been outlined with specific items delegated among staff.

### Community Development Projects

#### ARC POWER GRANT – ERIE-TO-PITTSBURGH TRAIL

Planning staff received authorization to use grant funds on December 27, 2021. As a result, the County now has the ability to move forward with expenditures for design and construction of trail segments along the Erie-to-Pittsburgh trail and PA Wilds Loop. Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) and planning staff coordinated the request for proposals for engineering services. Based on the timeframe discussed, the project should be under design within the next two to three months.

#### BEAVER, RICHMOND, AND STEUBEN TOWNSHIP ARCHITECTURAL BARRIER REMOVAL PROJECTS

Planning staff prepared and submitted invitations for bid associated with the three title projects. The Office will coordinate the procurement of services for these CDBG projects over the next three weeks and will open bids on February 14, 2022. The goal is to have a preconstruction meeting by February 22nd in order to allow a 7-week construction window. Completion of these projects is anticipated prior to May of 2022.

#### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT – FINAL RULE

On January 6, 2022, the United States Treasury released the Final Rule for the American Rescue Plan Act. This 437-page document will replace the interim final rule, the was published on May 17, 2021, effective April 1, 2022. Crawford County Planning is working to digest the rule and provide guidance to local municipalities.

### Legislative Updates

#### SENATE BILL 755 - AMENDING THE MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE – PROVIDING FOR DIGITAL TRANSMITTALS AND SUBMISSIONS TO GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

This bill amends Act 247, PA Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC), to specifically provide authorization for digital submissions and electronic transmittals of a proposed comprehensive plan or amendment, a proposed land use ordinance or amendment, or an adopted comprehensive plan, land use ordinance or amendment for review, comments, or recommendations. The bill passed the Senate and was referred to the local government committee in the House on November 12, 2021. Representative Wentling is on the local government committee in the House.

Crawford County Planning Commission should review the bill, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/PN/Public/btCheck.cfm?txtType=PDF&sessYr=2021&sessInd=0&billBody=H&billTyp=B&billNbr=1592&pn=1755>, to determine if we should advocate our support to representative Wentling that the bill be moved forward for a vote to the House floor.]

Commissioner Wickert moved that the Planning Commission issue a letter of support for Senate Bill 755. Motion tabled.

Commissioner Dreese encouraged participation from Commission members to attend one of the Conneaut Valley Boroughs Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan Focus Group Meetings. Any member with questions may contact Commissioner Wickert or Mr. Gilbertson.

**5. Public Comment:**

None.

**6. Subdivisions, Land Developments & Zoning Reviews:**

**A. Service Area Addition for Community Chevrolet Land Development, Vernon Township –**

Mr. Grella provided an overview of the Service Area Addition for Community Chevrolet Land Development in Vernon Township. Mr. Grella highlighted that the submission did not include some of the elements necessary for approval and recording. Commissioner Wickert moved to accept the Planning Office's commentary and to deliver it to Vernon Township. Commissioner Lawrence seconded. Motion carried.

**B. Zoning Amendment, Summit Township –**

Mr. Grella provided an overview of the proposed Zoning Amendment in Summit Township. Mr. Grella highlighted that the proposed amendment regulates solar energy systems through zoning provisions concerning where to permit such uses. Mr. Grella highlighted the concern that the proposed amendment appears to regulate items beyond the scope of what can be authorized by zoning. Commissioner Rock moved to accept the Planning Office's commentary and to deliver it to Summit Township. Commissioner Mattocks seconded. Commissioner Wickert asked when Summit Township adopted their zoning ordinance and if that community has any such development proposals currently pending. Commissioner Wickert further added that she is becoming increasingly concerned over large scale solar development citing both agricultural and environmental concerns. Commissioner Rock asked whether the language used in this zoning amendment and the issues presented differ from other similar amendments that have come before the Planning Agency. Mr. Grella replied that the proposed amendment appears to carry many of the same issues. Commissioner Dreese redirected the focus to conduct a roll call of the vote – motion carried.

**C. Zoning Amendment, Cussewago Township –**

Mr. Grella provided an overview of the proposed Zoning Amendment in Cussewago Township. Mr. Grella highlighted that the nature of the amendment concerns the accommodation of short-term rentals and noted that some of the definitions proposed may be problematic. Commissioner Wickert moved to accept the Planning Office's commentary and to deliver it to Cussewago Township. Commissioner Lawrence seconded. Motion carried.

**D. Administrative Subdivision Reviews –**

Mr. Grella provided an overview of administrative reviews completed by the Crawford County Planning Office since the Planning Commission's December 2021 regular meeting.

## 7. Old Business:

### A. State Ethics Commission – Statement of Financial Interests –

Mr. Norwood provided an overview of the State Ethics Commission's requirement to submit a form concerning a Statement of Financial Interests. All Planning Commission members and Planning Office staff must complete and submit the form in order to disclose financial interests or conflicts. Forms are due by May 1, 2022 and must be submitted to the Crawford County Voters Registration Office. **This form must be completed and submitted by all members by May 1, 2022 in order to avoid penalties.**

## 8. New Business:

### A. Crawford County Development Review Criteria –

Mr. Gilbertson provided an overview on five potential criteria that the Planning Commission might wish to consider focusing on for local development review. The development review criteria could guide how the Planning Commission influences the crafting of community development objectives, zoning provisions, subdivision and land development standards, and the voluntary actions of applicants and developers. Criteria presented included:

- traditional neighborhood development;
- accessible site design;
- conservation subdivisions;
- connectivity; and
- integration.

Mr. Gilbertson suggest that the Planning Commission delegate a further exploration of development review criteria to its subcommittees. Commissioner Wickert mentioned that it would be nice to provide education to local municipal planning commissions on the concepts previously covered. Commissioner Dreese commented that the presence of some local examples on sound development review criteria is encouraging and will benefit the Commission's ability to implement the strategic plan. Commissioner Mattocks suggested that the development review criteria presented can benefit those municipalities that have been interested in placemaking strategies. Commissioner Dreese suggested that the subcommittees should consider integrating discussions on development review criteria into their workplans over the coming months.

### B. Planning Commissioner Comments –

1. John Lawrence – welcomed new members;
2. John Frye – mentioned the flooding issues in Titusville and Hydetown and requested that the Planning Commission refocus on these problems;

3. Ron Mattocks – working to establish a complete branding strategy for the Crawford County Visitors Bureau;
4. Travis Palmer – no comment;
5. Austin Rock – looking forward to orientation, requested an acronym sheet;
6. Katie Wickert – the Planning Commission is poised to assist the relatively significant amount of planning work going on throughout the county at the moment;
7. Jessica Hillburn – seconded the acronym sheet request, mentioned that she is on the Titusville placemaking project, also wants the Planning Commission to focus on the flooding, and discussed her involvement in marketing for new trail development; and
8. Maria Dreese – welcomed new members and mentioned some of the ways that she will work with new members to orient them onto the Planning Commission.

C. Commissioner Dreese refocused discussion onto the topic of the Planning Commission's letter of support for Senate Bill 755 and requested a motion. Commissioner Wickert resumed her previous motion for the Planning Commission to provide a letter of support for Senate Bill 755 to Representative Park Wentling's office. Commissioner Lawrence seconded. Motion passed.

## 9. Adjournment:

Commissioner Dreese requested a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Lawrence moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Frye seconded. The January 2022 Crawford County Planning Commission Regular Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m. on Monday, January 24, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Dreese, Chair  
**Crawford County Planning Commission**

cc: Crawford County Board of Commissioners  
**Crawford County Planning Commission March 2022**

PENDING REVIEW BY THE CRAWFORD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ON 2.28.2022