

# **CRAWFORD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **September Regular Meeting Minutes**

### **Crawford County Fair Grounds (Homeshow Building #1), Meadville, Pennsylvania**

Commissioner Lawrence called the Regular Meeting of the Crawford County Planning Commission (Planning Commission) to order at 3:35 p.m. on September 26, 2022.

#### **1. Roll Call:**

##### **Present –**

John Frye  
Jessica Hilburn  
John Lawrence  
Austin Rock  
Scott Sjolander  
Katie Wickert, Vice-Chair  
(All members attended in-person)

##### **Absent –**

Maria Dreese, Chair  
Ron Mattocks, Secretary  
Travis Palmer

##### **Other Attendees –**

Randy Knuth  
Lynne Knuth  
Robert Knuth  
Francis Weiderspahn, Crawford County Commissioner  
Shane Shields

#### **2. Action on the August 2022 Meeting Minutes:**

Commissioner Lawrence requested a motion to approve the August 2022 Regular Meeting minutes. Commissioner Wickert moved to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Rock seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **3. Communications:**

- No Items at This Time

#### **4. Reports:**

##### **A. Standing Committees –**

Transportation Committee: Report was emailed to Commissioners. Commissioner Lawrence stated that a list of potential electronic vehicle charging station sites through out the county was compiled. The obstacle is funding. Each site is estimated to cost \$5,000-\$10,000 depending on the condition of the site. Municipalities that the sites are located in do not object to the charging stations, but they will not fund the charging stations. The Committee has communicated with Congressman Kelly and state officials about the charging stations.

The Committee is planning on doing a small PennDot survey and send it out to all municipalities. After results are compiled, the goal is to schedule a meeting with District 1. Direction will be to complete and return the survey by October 31, 2022. Municipalities will be asked to list 3 transportation issues that require PennDot participation.

Agricultural and Environmental Concerns Committee: Commissioner Wickert reported that the Committee has not met, but they are hoping to meet before November.

Personnel Committee: Commissioner Lawrence reported that the committee had a brief meeting last week to discuss anticipated applications for Planning Commission vacancies.

Planning Initiatives Committee: The Committee has not met.

## B. Planning Director's Report –

### **Administrative Updates**

#### **[PLANNING OFFICE RELOCATION]**

Beginning September 26, 2022 through noon on October 10, 2022, the Crawford County Planning Office will be relocated to the 3rd Floor of the Donald E. Dillon Center located 18360 Technology Drive due to the closure of the County Courthouse. Due to relocation venue and sharing of office space with other departments, staff is encouraging clients to coordinate a visitation time by calling 814-333-7341 or emailing [planning@co.crawford.pa.us](mailto:planning@co.crawford.pa.us) to ensure staff can quickly provide services to visitors. Additionally, please be aware that not all information will be accessible to staff; therefore, we may need to address your request upon return to the courthouse.

### **Community Planning Updates**

#### **COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

Staff are working to prepare materials and collect data in an effort to start the comprehensive plan update in 2023. More discussion on this subject will occur during the Commission's work session.

### **Community Development Updates**

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

Crawford County held two public hearings on September 20, 2022 for the FY 2022 CDBG program application. The meetings were located at the Vernon Township municipal building and Towne Square in Titusville. The public comment period will close on Friday September 30, 2022. Citizens can submit comments to the County by phone at (814) 333-7341 or email at [planning@co.crawford.pa.us](mailto:planning@co.crawford.pa.us) by the deadline. The application is due October 28, 2022.

Additionally, four construction projects were completed since the last planning commission meeting (Roche Park paving project and the Beaver, Richmond, and Steuben Township ADA projects). We've also had pre-construction meetings or start dates for three additional construction projects (phase 1 – Huidekoper Park improvements in Meadville, Rocky Glenn Road bridge replacement, and Diamond Street Park improvements in Titusville).

#### **CRAWFORD COUNTY ACT 13 PROGRAM**

Crawford County received notification from PennDOT that an error occurred when calculating the 2022 At-Risk Bridge allocation. The County will receive \$137,460.47 this year, which was a small decrease from the previous figure.

## Legislative Updates

NO UPDATE AT THIS TIME]

### 5. Public Comment:

Shane Shields representing Foundation Solar Partners, who is working with Hayfield Township on a solar project addressed the Commissioners. Discussion was prompted on:

- Wording discrepancies in the Hayfield Township ordinance draft
- Size and terms of the project in Hayfield Township
- How the project was established in Hayfield Township
- Decommissioning the site after use and restoring to a similar condition
- Bonding/ Financial Security for the land owner
- Environmental impacts (wetlands, streams, logging)
- Potential damage caused by wildlife
- Building solar sites in a flood plains and agricultural security areas (ASA)

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

#### A. Zoning Amendment – Hayfield Township (Solar)

Mr. Norwood provided an explanation of the materials (letter addressed to Hayfield Township and series of maps) provided to the Planning Commission. Mr. Gilbertson provided an overview of the proposed Zoning Amendment in Hayfield Township. Mr. Gilbertson highlighted the concern that even though the proposed zoning amendment does take some precautions in terms of environmental protection of natural resources, there were still some environmentally sensitive areas identified that are important to protect and more could be done to protect those areas. Mr. Gilbertson goes on to explain the maps and letter which provide three options of additional precautions. Commissioner Frye moved to accept the Planning Office's commentary and to deliver it to Hayfield Township. Commissioner Sjolander seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Norwood explained to the public in attendance the Zoning Amendment Review process.

#### B. Zoning Amendment – Woodcock Township (Solar)

Mr. Norwood provided an explanation of the materials (letter addressed to Woodcock Township and series of maps) provided to the Planning Commission. Mr. Gilbertson provided an overview of the proposed Zoning Amendment in Woodcock Township. Concerns were similar to Hayfield. Mr. Gilbertson highlighted the concern that even though the proposed zoning amendment does take some precautions in terms of environmental protection of natural resources, there were still some environmentally sensitive areas identified that are important to protect, such as Woodcock Lake and French Creek, and more could be done to protect those areas. Mr. Gilbertson goes on to explain the maps and letter which provide three options of additional precautions. Mr. Gilbertson defined de facto and per se exclusions in relation to the solar ordinance. A conversation was prompted about bonding for decommissioning requirements. Mr. Norwood explained that the state is considering regulating decommissioning requirements and that amendments will have to be updated to reflect those requirements. Commissioner Wickert moved to accept the Planning Office's commentary and to deliver it to Woodcock Township. Commissioner Hilburn seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Zoning Amendment – Woodcock Township (Housing)**

Mr. Norwood provided an explanation of the materials (letter addressed to Woodcock Township) provided to the Planning Commission. Mr. Gilbertson provided an overview of the proposed Zoning Amendment in Woodcock Township. Mr. Gilbertson highlighted concerns in terms of considering enforcement, making the amendment more user friendly, and standards of size for attached and non-attached housing units. A discussion was prompted about basement dwellings and reasonable sized dwellings. Commissioner Rock moved to accept the Planning Office's commentary and to deliver it to Woodcock Township. Commissioner Sjolander seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Administrative Subdivision Reviews –**

Mr. Norwood provided an overview of administrative reviews completed by the Crawford County Planning Office since the Planning Commission's August 2022 regular meeting. The report includes reviews conducted during September of 2022. Mr. Gilbertson added that he also completed five this morning.

**7. Old Business:**

**A. Discussion – Commission Annual Self-Evaluation –**

Mr. Norwood discussed that he still waiting for a couple evaluations and that he'll send out an reminder email.

**8. New Business:**

**A. Presentation/Discussion – County Comprehensive Plan Report Card**

Mr. Norwood provided an annual report with graphs to the Commissioners. Due to the lack of technology at the Fairgrounds, the presentation will be on the agenda for next month. Mr. Norwood did give a brief explanation of the annual report and the areas of focus.

A discussion was prompted about the 2023 budget.

Commissioner Sjolander moved to accept the Annual Report and to deliver it to the Crawford County Commissioners. Commissioner Frye seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Discussion – Planning Commissioner Comments –**

Commissioner Lawrence – Mentioned that Mr. Norwood was in the Newspaper for maintenance to a section of the trail system. He stated that updates to the Richmond Township building turned out very nice. He also mentioned that there is an architectural dig happening in Richmond Township.

Commissioner Hilburn – Mentioned that work was just completed on the East Branch Trail into Hydetown. New signage was recently put up. A multi-municipal trail study with Titusville and Hydetown is also being undertaken.

**9. Adjournment:**

Commissioner Lawrence requested a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Frye moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hilburn seconded. The September 2022 Crawford County Planning Commission Regular Meeting adjourned at 4:20p.m. on Monday, September 26, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lawrence  
**Crawford County Planning Commission**

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