**ATHENS COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ATHENS COUNTY, OHIO**

**MINUTES FROM MEETING November 10, 2022**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

ATHENS COUNTY: Neal Reynolds, Jason Morosko, Warren Jeffers

ATHENS CITY/COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT **–** Jack Pepper

ATHENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Charlie Adkins, Chris Chmiel

ATHENS CITY: Steve Patterson, Rob Delach

CITY OF NELSONVILLE – None

VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVE: Gary Goosman

TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVE: Steve Pierson

ATHENS COUNTY ENGINEER – Jeff Maiden

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT**: Mollie Fitzgerald, Bryan Hinkle, Don Gossel, Meredith Erlewine, Laura Olbers

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Upon determination that a quorum of at least nine (9) voting members was present, Vice-President Warren Jeffers called the November 10, 2022 meeting of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission to order at 8:03 AM. The meeting was held at the ACEMS Station #51, 21 Kenny Drive, Athens, OH 45701.

**GUESTS PRESENT**: Jessie Powers, Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia

**MINUTES:**

Motion by Chris Chmiel, seconded by Councilman Reynolds to approve as presented the meeting minutes of the October 13, 2022 Athens County Regional Planning Commission. All voted yes, motion passed.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The ACRPC received a request to approve a plat for a one lot major subdivision in Troy Township. The Dixon Subdivision is a major subdivision due to being a landlocked split with the creation of a new easement. Chris Chmiel made a motion to approve the Dixon Subdivision plat. Neal Reynolds seconded. All voted yes, motion passed.

The ACRPC received a request for a variance to waive the process for a major subdivision in Lodi Township. The proposed subdivision is sought for the creation of private cemetery as a standalone parcel and requests to be treated as a lot split. The Planning Commission questioned whether or not deed restrictions were in place for the proposed split. Multiple individuals expressed concern that the parcel would be used as a building site in the future. Steve Patterson made a motion to approve the variance. Neal Reynolds seconded. No ‘aye’ votes. Motion denied. The ACRPC recommended that the property owner provide more information before applying again.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) continues a major rehabilitation of the U.S. 33/U.S. 50 interchange which includes pavement, guardrail, drainage, lighting, and a roundabout constructed at Stimson Avenue. The project will be completed in multiple phases and involves closures which require detours. Currently, ODOT is in phase 2 of 6.

Athens City Mayor Patterson just received an award from ODOT this week for $3.2 Million for the reconstruction of Stimson Avenue bridge. The bridge will be pedestrian friendly and provide safe and consistent lighting. The bridge will provide pedestrian access to Townsend Coffee.

**CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS**

* **US 50 Corridor Sewer Expansion Project/Commissioner Eliason**
  + Blacktop is down in a lot of areas. University Estates will be getting blacktop before the winter weather hits. The project is still on schedule. The base rate has been reduced to around $55/month
  + Athens Township mentioned to the County Commissioners that many pieces still need to be paved.
* **Athens County Land Bank/Commissioner Chmiel** 
  + Athens County Landbank just completed multiple demolitions. The state provided reimbursements for some of those demolitions and the Land Bank hopes to receive more soon.
  + 83/85 High Street in Glouster is getting a new roof starting this month.
* **COVID-19 Health Emergency/Jack Pepper**
* The Athens City/County Health Department has been very busy with vaccines. As of right now, they are booked out two weeks in advance. Athens County is not seeing high numbers of COVID infections at this time but are receiving lots of messaging from the CDC and Ohio Department of Health to stay diligent. The southern hemisphere experienced a severe flu/COVID/RSV season, which is indicative that we will as well. There is hope that COVID will become a seasonal disease along the likes of flu and RSV. Athens County is consistently ranked in the lowest category of disease numbers.
* **Broadband Expansion and Access**
  + Frontier is deploying a lot of fiber around Athens City and Canaanville.
  + The broadband committee for the Village of Amesville has submitted their environmental review and expects RFPs to be going out soon. Spectrum received a lot of territory through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.
* **Age Friendly Athens County (AFAC)/Jack Pepper**
  + There is a coalition of individuals that have been meeting for a couple of years to work towards the AARP designation of being “Age Friendly.” There is now a need for funding to put someone in a director position to continue working towards this goal. Getting funding is proving to be more difficult than originally anticipated due to the sustainability side of things. The AFAC coalition is hoping to have someone hired and paid in the director position by early 2023.
* **SR 682 Corridor/Steve Pierson**
* Construction of a double roundabout at the USR 33/SR 682 interchange, similar to the one at USR 33/SR 664 is still awaiting a decision on funding through a Transportation Safety grant application.

**PLANNER’S REPORT: Presented by Commissioner Chmiel on behalf of Planner Olbers**

* Bikeways/Trails
  + Bikeway Resurfacing:
    - ODOT getting the bid packet ready
  + Bikeway Extension:
    - Waiting on review of the Contract of Sale from the NY Coal parcels. Altier COS was approved Tuesday 11/8/22 by Board of Commissioners
    - The previous Mussel Relocation report was approved by ODNR
  + Bikeway slip: There is a slip along the bike path between Glen Ebon and Hocking College, right along the Hocking River. Engineer Jeff Maiden and I went to look at it. It is a significant slip, so I have started the process of looking at funding sources.
* Subdivision:
  + More one lot majors coming through. We have a plat to approve today.
  + October saw 3 transfers between owners and one true minor split
  + Variance request:   
    The Subdivision Regulations don't directly address family cemeteries.  Because of the easement and no road frontage this doesn't fit the minor subdivision rules.  The variance request is to waive the process for major subdivision and treat this as a lot split for the specific use of a family cemetery.  A plat and description is all that should be required along with completing Appendices C and D from the Subdivision Regulations
* ACT
  + Funding requests are closed. Final teams were Rome, Trimble, Chauncey and Amesville.

**CITY, VILLAGE, TOWNSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

* **Athens County Engineer/Jeff Maiden**
  + The Athens County Engineer’s Office is preparing for winter. Additionally they have 7 bridges under design with federal money and have already closed two.
* **Village of Amesville/Gary Goosman**
* Mayor Goosman reports that the village is continuing work on SR550 and their complete streets.
* **Athens Township/Steve Pierson**

Athens Township reports that the Zoning Resolution effective in the unincorporated portion of Athens Twp located in the Census designated area known as The Plains has been in place for 2 years. 18 permits were issued in 2021 and 28 issued in 2022. Complaints, which generate work and no revenue, are running about 3 times the number of permits issued. There are still questions about how to fund an inspector position.

* **Creating Health Communities/Athens City-County Health Department**

No updates

* **Village of Albany/Council President Neal Reynolds**

Mr. Reynolds thanked the County Commissioners for providing funding to complete the sewer system. The Village is wrapping up their Comprehensive Plan. AEP is rewiring the entire village.

* **HAPCAP Transportation/ Bryan Hinkle**

Bryan Hinkle reported that HAPCAP will be putting up a bus shelter in the Village of Chauncey. They have selected a concrete contractor. Athens Public Transit is still working to get back to capacity, drivers hired and Saturday routes back. APT deployed the first electric bus in the state yesterday. HAPCAP is also looking into a technical assistance grant from ODOT for active transportation planning.

* **Athens County EMA/Don Gossel**

Mr. Gossel stated that the Hazard Mitigation Plan will need to be completed and adopted in a couple years. New inclusions include climate change adaptation and resiliency.

* **Athens County Commissioners**

Commissioner Chmiel reported a CBDG Cares proposal partnership with SAOP.

* **Athens County EDC/Mollie Fitzgerald**

EDC mentioned 1.3 million dollars in brownfield clean up is available. EDC is looking to get a housing survey to attract developers.

* **City of Athens**

Mayor Patterson asks that Appalachian Community Grants be added to the Continuing Discussions section of the agenda. The Mayors Partnership for Progress is putting together a planning grant. Jeff Maiden and Mayor Patterson were on a subcommittee for OPWC round 37. Nelsonville repaving project and the County project were tied with scoring. Albany was Number 3.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

* **ORCA/ Jessie Powers**

ORCA is applying for the Appalachian Community Grant Program for the Baileys Trail System. Baileys is looking to submit a development grant to build out Baileys. ORCA already secured a grant to hire a contractor to do a 7 county development plan. They are requesting support from the County Commissioners.

There being no further business to come before the Commission and no additional comments for good of the order, on a motion by Jack Pepper, seconded by Chris Chmiel and all voting member voting yes, Vice-President Jeffers adjourned the meeting at 9:13 AM.

The December 8, 2022 meeting of the Athens County Regional Planning Commission is anticipated to be conducted at the Athens County EMS Station 51, 21 Kenny Drive, Athens, Ohio at 8:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted by Laura Olbers, Director, Athens County Regional Planning Commission

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_